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## PREFACE.

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The ordinary purposes of a Preface being copiously served by the preliminary treatise, the only object of these lines is to explain to the reader the plan upon which the book is devised.

It is divided into three portions—the General Treatise, Handbook, and Supplement.

The object of the first is to supply all information calculated to enable the reader to make a survey of the subject; that of the second, to furnish full details respecting each individual work; and that of the third, to render the whole absolutely complete by the inclusion of all non-opus works, arrangements, and organ pieces; the latter being felt to be so far applicable to the piano as to form a fitting appendix to a work of this kind.

The first and third parts are therefore auxiliary; the central portion, or

### “HANDBOOK,”

forming the bulk of the design, and necessitating a word of explanation as to its internal arrangement.

The extremely varied nature of the information given has rendered it necessary, in providing it, to follow invariably the same order; so that, whatever may be the quest of the reader, no time need be lost in discovering what he requires. The works are therefore ranged according to opus-number; the notice of each being headed by—

1. Title, dedication (if any) and synopsis (in the case of the larger work).

Next follows—

2. Key, time and extent—

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the movement and all recognised modifications of the same; the time or bar-value, together with indicated changes; the total number of bars; and, where advisable, the distribution of the latter among sections of the work.

3. Thematic material—

showing the leading subjects, with short musical examples, and giving full particulars as necessitated by each individual case.

4. Melody—

including features of melodic progression; melodic contrasts; particulars of origin; or other facts as necessary.

5. Harmony—

including the survey of harmonic features from the student's point of view.

6. Rhythm—

including copious explanation of rhythmical traits; an exceptionally important feature in the works of Brahms.

7. Figuration—

to the slight extent in which this feature occurs.

8. Form—

with special reference to modifications, or to the exercise of any exceptional freedom;

and, 9. General characteristics—

including the quotation of opinions or any other interesting matter; besides which "Notes" are provided for special cases.

This order has been strictly adhered to; except in a few variation sets, where the "Variation" heading seemed more suitable, and in special cases for which a "General Description" sufficed. Facility of reference is thereby greatly promoted; besides being further increased by the reference of interesting questions to an "Analytical Index."

The reader will thus perceive that a great care has been exercised to render all contents of the book accessible; and

he may be assured that equal pains have been taken to ensure utility from the particulars when found.

In conclusion it should be mentioned that a large number of the thematic examples appear in this work by the kind permission of Herr Simrock, of Berlin, to whom and to whose courteous representatives in England every acknowledgment is due.

For the sake of brevity the examples are mostly compressed into a single stave, being intended only for identification of subjects and general elucidation of the text.

EDWIN EVANS, SENR.





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# BRAHMS PIANOFORTE WORKS.

## PART I.

### (A) GENERAL TREATISE.

#### CHAPTER I.

#### THE POSITION OF BRAHMS AMONG THE GREAT MASTERS.

1. The character of Brahms as a composer is somewhat difficult to define on account of its presentment of features usually supposed to be in contradiction. Thus, the opposing terms of new and old, or advanced and retrograde, or learned and intuitive might, with almost equal correctness, be applied to him; so that unless some further particulars were forthcoming the general reader could scarcely know what to believe.

2. With reference to the question of new and old, it may be noted, in the first place, that, though a modern among the moderns in respect of daring and enterprise, his heroism was largely founded upon old-time principles. He was certainly a pioneer, because his disregard of precedent led to his opening up new paths; and yet, upon examination, his work reveals that he was considerably influenced in many ways, and that he bore a special reverence to what had gone before. He was highly scientific in the employment of means; yet he had either so mastered the art of evolution or was so gifted naturally that his displays of learning seem to be fortuitous, and not in the least to resemble those parades of scholarship with which we usually associate the term.

3. So many combinations of qualities usually held to be in opposition naturally resulted in a style peculiarly his own; and the reader will feel no surprise to learn that it was one which excited considerable difference of opinion. According to Fuller-Maitland his individual qualities begin "in his manner of handling his themes, for, while adhering to the classical structure far more strictly than any of the great composers since Beethoven, he gave it new life by the ingenuity with which he presents his material in new aspects, and in particular by the kind of modulations he prefers. Instead of moving by gradual and definite steps to a remote key he often leaves out one, or even more, of the sequence of steps by which the distant key would naturally be reached, and certain key-relationships, well known of course before his time, are used with evident affection, such as the transition to the mediant or submediant of the key. In general his treatment of his subject is so instructive to the student and so delightful to the intelligent hearer that Brahms must be considered supreme among the great masters in this respect."

4. It will be seen that this judgment is arrived at by a critic regarding Brahms from the point of view of his manner of working. It will now be well to take the opinion of one who regarded him rather from that of principle and intention, because of the instruction we may derive from observing how these two sets of conclusions coincide, notwithstanding their being arrived at in such different ways. The following is from an article in the "Edinburgh Review," and is attributed to Sir W. H. Hadow. "The descendant of Bach and Beethoven, he was no less the inheritor and disciple of Schumann, and it was his work to show how full a measure of the new poetry could be poured into the moulds of an exact and perfect musical design. The character of his music, grave, dignified, noble, made it specially amenable to intellectual control; at its most impassioned moment it never loses grasp, at the flood time of eloquence it never forgets restraint; it is wholly incapable of extravagance or sensationalism, of cheap effect or facile appeal. It is not a music with which all hearers can be in sympathy; it covers a comparatively narrow range of emotion; it has little gaiety, little humour; its colouring is often sombre, its texture sometimes heavy and opaque. But for richness of idea, for sheer beauty of melodic outline, and above all for supreme and unerring mastery of structure, it stands, among the composi-

tions of our time, pre-eminent. There has been no musician since Beethoven to whose pages we can so often recur with the certainty of finding fresh cause for love and admiration."

5. We may also compare the above, which was written some ten years after the master's death and was therefore the result of an assessment of his entire career, with an opinion formed by Sir Hubert Parry nearly fifty years ago, and consequently before any of the great works from Op. 100 onwards had been written. "Brahms has revived in his work the principles of the great old contrapuntal school, and has worked into his instrumental forms the most musical qualities of the polyphonic method of Bach, of which he is a most powerful master. But this welding of old methods with new is accomplished without a trace of pedantry, as it is not the details but only the principles which are used. The manner and spirit are genuinely modern, but the matter is managed with the full powers which the earlier masters of the great choral age developed as well as the powers of the later sonata writers; that is to say the design is capable of being tested in all directions.

"Though he has always been faithful to the traditions of the classical school he shows no sympathy with the ultra-romantic modern school which seeks a new field for instrumental music by the help of programme and speculative devices of form.

"The example of a noble man tends to make others noble, and the picture of a noble mind such as is presented in his work helps so to raise others towards his level that the influence of his music is of the very highest value to art."

6. The student who has ploughed through the works of Brahms in detail easily recognises these as opinions based upon full knowledge of the subject. Their frankness and earnestness do not in the least savour of partisanship and the consensus of favour to which they contribute is therefore of great weight. The impartial onlooker cannot fail to be impressed by the contrast between the confidence and precision they exhibit and the vacillation and hesitation which is always associated with adverse views of the same composer. But fairness requires that the latter should also be included in a work of this description, and the attempt made to discover what they really are. The difficulty arises from a tendency on the part of such writers to contradict themselves, and to qualify both praise and blame to an extent which deprives them of all

meaning. The following, for example, are a few extracts from "Old Scores and New Readings," by J. F. Runciman:—"Much of Brahms' music is bad and ugly music; it is a counterfeit and not the true and perfect image of life indeed; and it should be buried or cremated at the earliest opportunity. But much of it is wonderfully beautiful—almost, but never quite, as beautiful as the great men at their best."

"He had not a great matter to utter; what he had he could not utter in the classical form; yet he tried to write in classical form."

"All his music is irreproachable from the technical point of view. Brahms is certainly with Bach, Mozart and Wagner in point of musicianship: in fact these four might be called the greatest masters of sheer music who have lived."

"Had he written nothing but small things his position might be a degree lower in the estimation of dull Academics who don't count, but he would be accepted at something like his true value."

"If ever a musician was born a happy, careless romanticist, that musician was Brahms."

7. In placing these statements in opposition there has been every care to guard against all injustice to their context, and it must be left to the reader to reconcile them if he can. He would be wrong however to regard them as designedly hostile; they represent rather one phase of the vapid society views which are bound to be in vogue with regard to any composer much talked of. Everyone was supposed to know something about Brahms; and one who did not (a type of which there are still specimens in abundance) had, of course, to issue from the ordeal as gracefully as possible. This society attitude was very wittily described by Hugh Scott; and his anecdotal form of putting the case will instantly appeal:—"Do you like Brahms?"—(it was a little dialogue recently heard). "Brahms?—er—er—Oh! yes, certainly. Yes! I like Brahms very much." Whereto the first speaker with happy wit replied, "No more do I."

8. Scott goes on to plead for sincerity; and there we leave him. We must assume all critics to be sincere; the question being first to find out what their opinions really are (which it will be seen is sometimes difficult) and then to know how they have been arrived at. A patient observation results in showing them to be generally the writings of men who have become

satiated with musical luxury until they have lost the appetite for plainer food. In nearly all of them we find the comparison drawn between Wagner and Brahms—in other words, between colourist and etcher—and made in such terms as to imply that not to be a colourist is not to exist. During the life-time of Brahms his friends undoubtedly made the same mistake, and therefore it may be true, as Runciman says, that they “pitted him against Wagner”; but that does not enable us to see how Brahms can be held responsible for with such comparisons he had nothing to do. Had any disposition existed on his part to compare himself with Wagner he certainly received much provocation to call it into action. But, instead of that, we find him emphasising the fact that no ground could ever exist for bringing Wagner and himself into collision.

9. No; it was not Brahms, the imperturbable, who was ever upset by the “programme-school”; but the latter who were rendered uneasy by the presence of such a powerful upholder of classical traditions. It seemed to disturb them in their favourite pose of having left all that behind them—of having in some way (never explained) superseded and improved upon it. To add to his offence Brahms acted as though his mission were not only to revive the old order, but to do so in a modern way, by selecting any suitable weapon from their own armoury. And then, there was the crowning offence of having *succeeded*; which of course went entirely beyond forgiveness.

10. This question of “colour” merits to be dwelt upon, as Brahms’s attitude towards it has largely to do with his position in the world of art. If we admit that degrees of warmth in logical discourse are in any sense akin to those gradations of sensuous tint in which programme-subjects are arrayed, it follows that, to the absolutist, colour begins long before the appearance of differences of *timbre*. To him every form of contrast exhibits colour; and much of that which appeals to the programmist as if it were exclusively of the nature of colour merely strikes the absolutist as the gaudy out-decking of what would frequently be better without it. The love of this gaudiness is all-too-easily accounted for, however, as it is so handy for the purpose of making sure of *something* being left to keep the listener going during the painfully frequent absence of genuine musical thought. Still, it is not for us to assume the employment of gaudy colours for a wrong purpose; only, we must insist that the habit of judging between more delicate

tints is bound to give the absolutist an even greater discrimination than can possibly be possessed by any other type of musician.

11. The fact is that the programme-school is simply one of sensationalism; and that Brahms' secluded life was naturally productive of opposite tendencies. Nor did he give heed to that ultra-critical manner which is now so much the fashion, and which Kelterborn mentions as more conspicuous in music than in any other field. The latter also calls attention to the fact that it is no longer a life-devotion to art upon which the critic relies; for, providing he has the requisite literary power for making out a case and can assess the merits (but especially the shortcomings) of those he passes in review with sufficient plausibility to serve an ephemeral purpose, he is satisfied. This tendency has been too long upon the increase for us to find fault with its present representatives; for it was the same manifestation which led Goethe to doubt whether such an appearance as that of Shakespeare would any longer be possible. It is of such incalculable injury to the true cause of art that creative artists (who are naturally sensitive) are constantly impeded by it; and Goethe recommended precisely the mode of life which Brahms adopted. On this subject Kelterborn goes on to say:—"That such self-chosen isolation resting upon a strong personal and artistic character, yet combined with a hearty interest in all human concerns and the most comprehensive general culture, is possible, even in our modern time, and that it can be crowned with the most wonderful results, is splendidly shown in the career of Johannes Brahms; whose greatness rests mainly on this unswerving fidelity to his genius in spite of all adverse criticisms during the years of his development and attained mastership."

"Several prominent characteristics of Brahms' work command our admiration. From the start he appeared as a strong individuality, and notwithstanding a leaning towards Bach's polyphonic art and harmonic wealth, Beethoven's virile pathos and ideality of purpose, and Schubert's melodic charm, he has spoken his own distinct language. In every field of composition except the opera he has contributed masterpieces which show that in each he has to-day no superior, and in but few an equal."

12. Kelterborn seems also to have noticed the vacillations of adverse critics; and the following is obviously addressed

to those who could not make up their minds whether Brahms was old or new.

"Brahms is essentially a *modern* composer. With all his so-called conservative tendencies there is hardly a passage in his works which could have been written at an earlier stage of musical art."

13. The reproach that Brahms "could not write in classical form" would have seemed almost too marvellous to trouble about but for a certain passage in Runciman where he says:—"Whenever his imagination warmed he straightway began breaking the bonds in which he had endeavoured to work."

14. This seems to throw a light upon the peculiar view sometimes taken of such artistic matters as the grafting of two movements in the second violin sonata; which, it would seem, are not to be regarded as licences indicative of mastership, but of a failure to meet the exigencies of form. Yet there is nothing so degrading to the formal beauty as a *slavish* fidelity; in which respect we may adduce the evidence of Fuller-Maitland, who views it as a merit in Brahms that:—"In opposition to prevailing tendencies towards a neglect of cyclic forms in favour of free, rhapsodic or programmatic fantasias, he cultivated the former with supreme devotion; enriching them and modifying them in many ways, but so that they still appear as representative of their types."

15. The verdict in this matter is referred to the reader; as is also that upon the merit of the secluded life; respecting which all critics are not agreed. Thus, R. Farquharson Sharp, in "Makers of Music," says that:—"Brahms' isolation of himself to lead a student life at Vienna is to be regretted on the ground that it has given to much of his music a sombreness of character, the result of thoughtful abstraction and introspection. He was so unwilling to mix in the turmoil of the outer world that nothing would induce him to visit England. 'You have my music,' he once said in answer to an invitation—"why do you want me?"

16. We have it from another source that he was afraid a visit to this country meant "passing his entire time in a dress coat and white tie"; and there are many, besides hermits, who entertain a similar objection. We now pass on to an assessment of the merit of his attempt to weld the old and new; Kelterborn again being the authority. He says:—"Already in his earlier choral works we are reminded of the style of Pales-

trina, of old German folk-song and of Bach's polyphony, associated throughout with a new mode of expression; until, in the German Requiem, we have a work of such great importance that, without a knowledge of it, neither a full estimation of Brahms nor of the latest epoch in music can be obtained."

17. There also remains the vexed question of emotional appeal which must ever possess a vagueness in consequence of the force of appeal varying with the receptive powers of those to whom music is addressed. The subject is therefore dangerously controversial in its nature; but Dickenson in his "Growth and Development of Music," puts the case impartially, in very few words:—"To some he is entirely unsympathetic. The love of his music is a matter of temperament."

18. Hugh Scott's allusion to the same subject is slightly more expatiative, but quite as impartial. "Herbert Spencer once observed that his philosophy was not so much caviare to the general as castor-oil. The same may be said perhaps of Brahms' music—or at least of some of it. Beyond question he seldom lays himself out to tickle the long ears of the multitude; and even the cultivated may be fairly pardoned if his work does not always appeal to them at once."

19. We have now heard a sufficient variety of opinion; and, in full deference to them all, we may now venture to sum the matter up. In judging of Brahms there are clearly two issues before us. If we are unable to grant that absolute music is capable of continued development, it follows that we must regard the act of attempting to pioneer in that direction as the leading of a forlorn hope. In such case it matters not who the composer may be, since our creed is in opposition to his. Any special hostility we may evince towards him individually then becomes a tribute to his success; for, were he unsuccessful, we should only too gladly pass him by. Our duty in the matter is obviously to generalise our objections; and to address them, not to any personality, but in common to all who profess a doctrine which we believe to be false.

20. But if, on the other hand, our minds accept a devotion to formal beauty, an individuality of style, a holding-fast to the good—whether old or new, a stern fidelity to truth in expression, a consistent refusal to propitiate the vulgar, and an indifference to all obstacle as the highest attributes of a great master, we need only to study his works to perceive the full right of Brahms to an honourable place with the Immortals.



## CHAPTER II.

### BRAHMS AS A PIANOFORTE COMPOSER.

21. The piano works of Brahms stand to his instrumental works generally in something of the same relation as do the songs to the great mass of his vocal creations—from the point of view, that is, that each of these two classes of work constitutes a familiar medium of approach to the austere master, by means of which we are enabled first, it may be, only to tolerate—but afterwards to love his rough-hewn traits of character. And if, in each case, either a technical smallness of calibre or an æsthetic limitation of design should cause these works to appear but faintly representative of the master whose command of immensity both in scope and proportion is so abundantly revealed to us in the larger works, this is so well compensated for by a filling up of the smaller vessels with material to overflowing and by a crowding together within them of beauties so manifold and suggestive that, long after we have deemed ourselves to be seized with a full knowledge, we are often overtaken by new discoveries leading to a desire to follow up the novel interest so awakened. Thus a feeling is apt to take possession of our minds, in lieu of our previously imagined state of enlightenment, to the effect that we are, after all, merely starting to make his acquaintance.

22. The facility of approach to the master afforded by either the songs or the piano works is, therefore, not so great as might be expected from the smallness of the means in each case called into requisition. The reason of this is that, though the means are slender, the material is not so; and our facility may be said to be merely a result of the more frequent opportunity of performing these works, for this enables us to experiment with the music, to analyse its characteristics (especially those which give a repellent first impression) and easily to

indulge in those studious repetitions so peculiarly essential to the appreciation of a composer of such independence and—as may even sometimes be said—of such ruthless originality.

23. But, although the songs and piano works may be usefully braced in the above sense, there are circumstances which somewhat disturb this equality of description; for, to begin with, piano works, as compared with the songs, are extremely few in number; and, even within their smaller range are more pointedly marked off in style and general feature. These two facts, however, are of common origin; for it is essentially the same reason which accounts for the songs being so numerous and the piano works so few, and also explains the greater variation in the latter's character. Thus, in the case of the songs, it was doubtless the endless variety of poetic expression which came to the composer's rescue in providing him with ideals calculated to set his æsthetic longings at rest and tempted him to return so frequently to this form of composition. But, with purely instrumental work, the whole world of musical expression lay open to be explored; and, with a continually receding horizon, it was natural that the piano should soon prove an inadequate voice, and that in justice to himself he should by and by abandon it in favour of means presenting more of the diversity and fullness requisite for complete expression of his thought.

24. When later on, therefore, Brahms returned to piano composition it was with the consciousness of having asserted his mastership in another domain. He could thus no longer feel the same temptation as formerly to overburden his beloved clavier by calling upon it for effects held by many to be out of proportion to its resource; and difference of style became the natural result. Hence also the comparative rarity with which in later life he engaged in piano composition. Not only his affection for the instrument and his interest in its concerns were in no sense diminished, but probably those were the very feelings which combined to cause him to regard such writings in the light of an indulgence to himself—of a yielding to temptation—or, in some sort of a neglect of the higher purposes to which he felt that his mind should be devoted.

25. When we come to apply these reasonings to the actual facts we find that, of the one hundred and twenty-two works (excluding those without opus number) which constitute the composer's total bequeathment, those dedicated to the piano

solo number only fifteen—counting, that is, the collections made by himself as units in the list. Moreover, of these few, six were written before the age of twenty-three; and before enjoyment therefore of sufficient opportunity for confiding his thoughts to other interpretative means. This leaves only nine for the entire remainder of his life; or, practically, the insignificant contribution of one new work on average for every five years.

26. At the onset accordingly we see that the keenness of interest which the piano works of Brahms excite (and will unquestionably more and more excite as time goes on) rests entirely upon the fact of their possessing peculiarities not to be found in other composers.] If, on the one hand, surprise is felt that a composer of such early distinction in connection with the instrument should have written so little for it, there is on the other still greater ground for surprise at the interest evoked by what he actually did write. For it was not only seldom that he approached the instrument in this sense, but also, as was generally thought, that he wrote for it unattractively and unsuitably—to which may be added that the success which attended his activity in other channels was in every sense calculated to divert attention from this particular form of output.

27. It is also interesting to note the mode of occurrence of these last nine works. After the first group of pieces extending as far as the Ballades known as Op. 10, there was a first break of five years. Then, in each of the two years following, a single piece came forth. But already that high symphonic ambition had departed with which he had at first assailed the instrument; and it is significant that never, after the F minor Sonata, did he again approach it in the same way. There had been the intermediate triumph of the Sextet, Op. 18, to cause a revulsion of feeling; and the piano, instead of being now regarded as a factotum of expression seemed more to be viewed in respect of mere utility. Thus, not only in the two pieces referred to, but also in those written after a further lapse of four years, the mechanical form of the Variation was adopted. It is no argument that the very greatness of the master caused him, even within such straight-laced conditions, at once to overleap traditional bounds and to present us with specimens in abundance of such philosophic depth and expressed with such a ruggedness of tonal perception as to give his friends cause for thanksgiving and his enemies occasion to blaspheme. It is, of course,

true that friend and foe were equally stricken, though in such opposite ways; but this must not be allowed to divert our attention from the fact that these master-strokes were after all directed with a technical view.

28. The appearance of so many variations in succession would alone suffice to justify this conclusion; the variation-form being one of traditionally intimate association with the study. Instances bearing upon this view will instantly occur to the reader; some indeed being of works with an openly declared technical intention, such as Schumann's "*Etudes en forme de Variations*." The last two of the Brahms works which we are now contemplating fall precisely within this category—these being the Paganini Variations, frankly avowed to be "*Studies*," pure and simple. The mastership exhibited, therefore, though proving Brahms a great man and one bound to be true to himself under all circumstances, does not assail the conclusion that his use of the instrument had now changed and that these works are to be regarded as a special class.

29. In this way we already encounter one serious difference of style in the master's work; so completely marked off in his career that never again were variations for the piano destined to issue from his pen. With the last of these his "*Sturm und Drang*" stage may be said to have ended; and when, after the prolonged further period of thirteen years he at last returned to his first love, it was as the home-coming of some wanderer bronzed with travel and brimful of friendly anecdote of his experiences. Again he appears with a brace of works—the *Clavierstücke* and *Rhapsodies* (Op. 76, 79) wherewith to tell the tale before resuming the main road of his activity; but, few and short as they are, they are the heralds of a new school, and their content the mere chapter-heading of what those who appreciate them can only hope to be destined later on to become more completely unfolded.

30. It is well that we should here pause for a moment to note the serious import of this new style of work, for these *Clavierstücke* and *Rhapsodies* are no mere passing contribution to the world of piano literature; and when, at last, the love of force and technical display shall have subsided, and when even the expression of delicate sentimentality shall have somewhat declined in attraction the spirit breathed in them will be found to assert itself in tones of such eloquent significance as to make all wonder at their long neglect.

31. Such then was the composer's return after this prolonged interval; and not even the reflection that the latter had been utilised in order to give to the world the greater portion of the choral works, inimitable chamber pieces and half the symphonies can altogether extinguish the pianist's special regret that more was not vouchsafed for his behoof—the pianist, that is, of an inward and spiritual grace, and who does not principally love himself and his own display.

32. After the episode constituted by the two works alluded to a further interval occurred. Again it was one of prolonged duration; no less than twelve years being allowed to pass before Brahms' reappearance as a piano composer. Again we encounter a novel apparition, not perhaps so marked as in the previous instance; but of great importance nevertheless, as we shall endeavour to show.

33. In the interim there had entered into the composer's life the fullest and noblest of experiences—the calm consciousness of having vindicated the worth of classical traditions by proving their entire applicability to modern conditions. The moral of this is distinctly pointed in the *Passacaglia* of the Fourth Symphony; and none therefore who enter into the feeling here intended to be conveyed can wonder at the placidity with which the latest piano works are overcast; and which, while causing them to breathe contentment and calm, speaks also in tones of wisdom and ripe experience. As compared with Op. 76 and 79 however the difference is more of degree than of kind; for which reason the whole are merged in the classification presently to follow.

34. It would be a pity however if this union into one class of works so separated in point of time were allowed to impede the separate comment due to those of the later period, the special charm of which is such that within the range of their attractions they have no equal. It may be confessed perhaps that the feelings they arouse are mostly for the musician alone; simply because the ideas which kindle these emotions are expressed in subtleties of the tonal language which can alone by him be appreciated. But in reality these little compositions are as sensuous as even the most gorgeously exuberant piece of modern orchestration; though whether their effects strike home or not entirely depends upon the mental equipment of those who listen to them. The idea that all art must necessarily be "understood of the people" is one which has been well ex-

ploited, and not always with the worthiest of motives. It is therefore well to insist that in all considerations of human feeling the musician is at least also a man; and that, as such, he needs to make no apology to the outer world for the possession of ideas into which the latter is unable to enter. These later pieces of Brahms form an ideal opposition to the reasoning which maintains that human feeling is lacking whenever the mode of expression prevents an universal appeal; and their strains are as a flowing fountain of human sympathy, none the less real because of the liability of their effect to be in some cases obscured.

35. As it would be pardonable in the general reader to regard the above description as an over-praise, we have now to consider the means whereby a just appreciation of the piano works of Brahms is to be obtained; and this consists firstly in the acquirement of correct ideas of the piano in its relation to abstract music.

### CHAPTER III.

#### ABSTRACT CHARACTER OF THE BRAHMS PIANO-FORTE WORKS.

36. It is now for us to justify the proposition that the piano works of Brahms require a special equipment for their appreciation; and to explain how this equipment commences with an exact assessment of the relation of the piano to abstract music.

37. But what is abstract music? Let us entirely guard ourselves from supposing this to be a mere cloudy metaphysical expression designed to shelter some untenable theory, which, if more frankly stated, could not be entertained. The cultivation of music in the abstract may not be the fashion of this age; but its existence is supremely independent of any mere customs which we may choose to follow, and, like other eternal ordinations, it pursues us whether we will or no. The present drift of musical art is to relegate its abstract study and enjoyment more and more to a position of subordination. Yet the most strenuous advocate of the emotional is glad enough to revert to slender means in order to recall the effect of a gorgeous orchestral display which he has heard; and, in doing so, he proves that, had his perceptions been keener, he might have received the same impressions with far less display in the first instance. Whence, indeed, comes the necessity for our vast accumulations of tone?—for our piling up of the sounds of all existing media in order that, by simultaneously acting upon our dull senses, they may galvanise them into some condition of being able to realise the inward meaning of tonal sentences? From the want of power to appreciate music in its state of absolute purity—in the abstract.

38. Now, the head and front of Brahms' offending is that he is a composer of abstract music; and that what he writes stands for a great deal more than actually meets our senses.

This is no more than happens almost at every instant of our lives; say, in the merest glance at any material object, which also conveys to us a great deal more than our eye actually sees, by drawing upon a stock of knowledge already possessed. The two cases are, in their essence, precisely alike; the difference being not with them, but with the average man; who is possessed, in the one case, of a stock of knowledge which supplements and enlargens the action of his senses—but not in the other.

39. There could not be a fuller proof of the wane of abstract musical perceptions than the phenomenal uprise of orchestral music; which, almost in the same proportion as its increase of appeal to the physical sense, presents such a marked decrease of abstract qualities that the dispassionate analyst, in investigating works of this order, usually finds far less of interest than in music calling a smaller amount of merely physical means into play. The fact is that an over-presence of the one seems to dispense with the necessity of the other; for it is within the experience of most of us to have found ourselves entranced by that which, stripped of its gorgeous dress, we have instantly rejected. The question however of "Who is right?" is one which we have not set out to discuss. Whether our ideal is to be of music so contrived that it dispenses with the necessity on our part of all knowledge whereby its effect should be enlarged—or, whether it is to be of a pure tonal language the eloquence of whose terms lies in the signification they convey to us by the aid of our previous equipment—these are questions with which Brahms has nothing to do. He did not stand before the world as an advocate of either of them. What he did is equally the right of every man. He chose that which he preferred; and even his opponents must admit that he followed it courageously and consistently to his life's end.

40. This faint outline necessarily inadequate through being confined within such narrow limits, may nevertheless suffice to show what is meant when we speak of the relation of the piano to abstract music. For what is that relation in the first instance? How can we approach this subject with absolute truthfulness and, at the same time, without appearing ruthless in regard to that which has after all a deep hold upon our affections? That is the difficulty.

41. The relation then of the piano to abstract music is extremely slight; and the esteem which the piano has earned from



us, and which it runs not the slightest danger of losing, is nevertheless based upon the fact that it is able to do everything a little and nothing much. The most simple relation to abstract music conceivable on the part of any instrument is its power to produce an equable tonal sound. But the piano does not possess this; because a *diminuendo* sets in from the moment that a key is struck. And, although it may seem arbitrary to attempt to fix the order in which such demands should be made, yet it seems reasonable to regard as next in natural sequence the power of *crescendo* and *diminuendo* upon a given note. This, also, is a matter which, in connection with the piano, cannot be thought of. Moreover sudden impact and subsidence is not there; the portamento of the voice is not there; true intonation is not there; and the uplifting voice of Nature is not there; for the scale of the piano rises in attenuation.

42. "Ah!" it may be said, "but it can simulate these things most delightfully—so delightfully, indeed, as to make us forget that it is not really the truth to which we listen." Yes; and so delightfully, too, as to beget a consciousness in penning these lines that those who read them will not be in the least grateful. That is all true. But remember that the question before us is that of appreciating the works of a composer who preferred to write the truth; and that what we have really to settle is whether we shall blame him for doing so or not rather ourselves for failing to understand him. He differs from other composers in frankly accepting the piano as it is; and in not making any attempt to compensate for its defects. He consigns his thoughts to it in the same way as to a more perfect exponent, depending upon those to whom those thoughts are addressed to accept them in their abstract sense. Other composers resort to varieties of device whereby the sound produced shall factitiously approximate to that of an ideal expression; and, in doing so, they notoriously decorate and modify the original conception—sometimes out of recognition.

43. That might not so greatly matter, did the question but end there; and it might even be upheld as an advantage, when considered from one point of view. "Is not this intended to be heard?" it might be urged. "And, therefore, is it not the sound which has most to be considered?"

44. Yes indeed; for the case is precisely analogous to that of listening to a discourse in some unknown tongue. Then, also, the mere sound would be in the foreground; and unless

the speaker, either by vehemence of declamation or by melting accents, betrayed the drift of his feeling, we should know nothing of the signification intended to be conveyed. But the grand point is that, even with such aid, our participation in the speaker's ideas would remain insignificant in comparison with that of a native listening to one of his own countrymen speaking even in an undertone. The less we know the more demonstration we require to make us understand. No one disputes that it is right to adopt the means best calculated to convey ideas to those whom we address; just as it was right to teach people by the aid of pictures before they had commonly learned to read.

45. So far so good. But it is neither Brahms himself nor his followers who find fault with the means best calculated to convey ideas to the unsophisticated; but the great mass of superficialists who find fault with Brahms for speaking to his own in the manner which best befits their case. The latter are foolishly supposed to wish to don airs of superiority; whereas, without modesty, they could not be followers of Brahms at all. Not from students of abstract music is arrogance ever to be looked for; and Brahms himself when goaded by Wagner's animosity could only say—"How can I, going my own modest way, be any hindrance to him? Why not leave me in peace?"

46. But still the question remains—Why could not Brahms have written in the abstract sense, and yet have gone more with the stream, in the sense of writing more like other people? It may be admitted that the union is conceivable; and for that reason the enquiry is one which should be met. Not only it should be met but it constitutes the very problem upon which all our attention should be focussed: and the answer is:—

47. Because the adoption of conventional "pianistic" means limits the use of the piano as a medium for abstract musical expression and confines it to what is capable of being dressed up in one peculiar style.

48. Those who "brood" (for that is how Brahms' habit of deep thought is often described) know that the popular comprehension of a term is generally in inverse ratio to glibness in the use of it. They are not therefore surprised to find their scrutiny of the question of "pianism" lead them to conclusions essentially differing from the current idea. At the risk of a digression it may be well to say a few words on this score.

49. The piano is an instrument possessed of so enormous a facility of note-production that no other musical medium has the slightest chance of competing with it. Its technique has developed so as to allow of the most extraordinary feats being accomplished; though withholding these from all but a privileged few, notwithstanding a wide-spread exercise of industry and perseverance. The simple question is whether this facility of note production has been properly applied.

50. The technique of an orchestral instrument immediately brings us face to face with limitations of compass, difficulties of note production; either single-note capacity or limitations in note-combination; differing registers; and mechanical impossibilities—to say no more. We have accordingly the cultivation of such figurations as best display the range; the adoption of favourable positions; forms of special resonance or expression—and so forth. Now, the piano knows nothing of the difficulties referred to and should therefore know absolutely nothing of the remedies instituted to obviate them. It is simply incorrect to establish a school of set forms and then, after having acquired an inveterate habit in their favour, to pretend that they are peculiarly “pianistic”; thus begging the question against abstract music which takes no cognisance of their existence. An instrument with the piano’s facility of note production is neutral; and there is nothing “unpianistic” which the hand can reach and the instrument produce. It may be unworthy if it is unconventional and contains nothing; but it is equally unworthy if it is what is called “pianistic” and contains nothing.

51. Every one who has tried to play Brahms has noticed features which are really explained by the above. His rapid changes in hand-position have been a puzzle to many. The apparently illogical manner of his note distribution shocks the sensibilities of those who regard it as a breach of convention; and his disregard of mechanical convenience seems to them quite gratuitous. The idea of his point of view being different is so slow to dawn upon people that when Dr. Hanslick remarked a sparing use of the little finger of the left hand he did not proceed to ask the reason, or that of the special facility in chord-attack which he seemed to think led to excessive nobleness of character in Brahms’ playing. It seems therefore to be left to the “brooders” who are Brahms’ legitimate descend-

ants to find these matters out; and an attempt will accordingly be made to handle each case as it arises.

52. But all harks back to the question of the "abstract." It was said at the commencement that it follows us whether we will or no, and those who play piano arrangements of orchestral works are just like old Jourdain in the "Bourgeois Gentilhomme" when he *talked prose* without knowing it. Moreover, they naively accept the abstract for works beyond the piano's means, but they object to it in the case of works written for the instrument. Like the critics in 1859, when the Op. 15 Concerto was first performed, they ask: "Where are our runs? and where are our trills?" And, if those same critics were still alive, they might apply their questioning to the whole of the piano works. A scale-passage really *does* occur in the F sharp minor Sonata; and another in one of the rhapsodies. Those who would find more of conventional feature must needs take a lantern with them. Appreciation depends upon recognising the abstract point of view; and that Brahms, in descending to keyboard interpretation, adopts his own technique.

By the light of what has now been stated we shall next proceed to classification of the works.

## CHAPTER IV.

### TECHNICAL TRAITS AND CLASSIFICATION.

53. In the last chapter we dealt with the abstract nature of the Brahms piano works; and now, before proceeding to their classification, it will be necessary to allude to certain technical features which flow from that special attribute.

54. It is passing strange that Brahms, who is ever accused of technical difficulty, should have been the composer of all composers to make concession to the player's weakness. Fondly as he must have regarded the logical conclusion, so to speak, of his ideas, he nevertheless seems always prepared to sacrifice this rather than draw too largely upon the performer's technical power. There will, hereafter, be occasion found to point out such cases, literally by the score; wherefore a single instance will now suffice to make the meaning clear. The question is one of very special interest to all who are at all zealous over problems of piano technique; because in the great majority of cases, a searching investigation reveals the fact that full evolution of the passages in question is possible, and frequently easy; though only by methods not generally recognised. In view of this discovery a very natural question arises whether Brahms, who as everyone knows, had a special manner of playing, really performed the works as they are written; or whether it is not more likely that he, to whom the full development of the thought was everything, and whose painstaking in everything he did is so abundantly evident, had not only discovered the methods in question but turned them to practical account.

55. Such episodes have been described as numerous; and, accordingly, it is not necessary to travel far without encountering one of them—the one which shall suffice for the present mere purpose of elucidation. It naturally occurs in the first movement of Op. 1 (for there is scarcely a movement to be

found altogether free of such feature) and commences with bar 142; which is about half way through the development. It consists of six bars in canon (*pp dolciss.*) the two parts of which situated at a bar's distance, are divided between the two hands; the single notes being elaborated in the sense of each consisting of an octave, with intermediate third or sixth. This elaboration causes the hands to interlock as the second part enters; whereupon (much to the injury of the effect) the octaves of the right hand elaboration are dispensed with for the remainder of the passage. Whether it is difficult or not to put them in entirely depends upon the method adopted in their performance; and, as a matter of fact, when rightly undertaken it is far easier to put them in than to leave them out—to say nothing of the feature that *only* then the true beauty of the passage becomes evident.

56. For the moment however æsthetics stand aside; as we are only concerned to show that Brahms, far from being the inconsiderate writer to show disregard for mechanical difficulty, has been positively *magnanimous* in the endeavour to present his ideas in the form best calculated to suit—not his own—but a conventional style of performance. There are very few even among tenth-rate composers, who would have gone so far: indeed the latter would have been just the sort to take pride in the exhibition of work, easy to them, but difficult to everyone else.

57. As has been stated, this instance has only the speciality of being first in order; and, although its importance is sufficient to support the onus of argument, it becomes trivial when compared with that of others which might have been quoted. Sometimes these concessions go so far as to make one wonder how Brahms could have found the fortitude to refrain from amplifications which were nothing less than integral to his work. But the wonder is still greater that, after all, he should be thought to be indifferent.

58. It may be hoped that this will help to bring home to the reader's mind that the music in which it occurs is "abstract." Brahms himself may or may not have thought of it in such terms; but it is clear that kindred ideas were present in his mind, or he would not have been invariably so careful to present the initial thought in its full design, and to postpone all infringement of it until it had been sufficiently unfolded to make the meaning clear. A hard worker himself he seems to have

calculated upon an equal earnestness in others; and upon the fact that they would derive from his works a mental pleasure quite apart from that due to their mere audible expression.

59. It is perhaps due to the latter consideration that in matters of mere notation he really does seem to display indifference. Where the mere notes can easily be compassed he disdains to go out of his way to present a conventionally pianistic adaptation of them; in which respect he again shows a clinging to the abstract sense. It is marvellous to think of the change which would accrue in the popularity of his piano works if one sufficiently qualified and reverent could be found to present them, side by side with the original reading, in such form as to lie to the best advantage for an intelligible rendering. Take, for example, the six bars 91 to 96 from the same movement; and occurring at the change of key after first section. It may seem paradoxical to say so, but we often hear these played without *ever* hearing them. It is again a question of canon; and again a question of technical concession; for Brahms has deliberately sacrificed the truly exquisite effect which the upper part if consistently carried out in thirds in accordance with his evident thought would have produced. He has done this in the kindly desire to temper his blast to the back of the shorn pianistic lamb and has received no thanks therefore. This, however, is not the question immediately at issue, for it is simply of the notation we wish to speak; and a frank gift is made to cavillers of the admission that, as presented, this passage is thankless; and that a consummate skill would be required to render the simultaneous crescendo and decrescendo due, respectively to ascending and descending parts, and to keep also a subordinate touch for the drone and occasional murmur of the bass. Brahms was only a youth when this was written; yet how aptly it applies to all his future work and how completely it justifies the saying of Schumann that he sprang into the arena full armed. Did he play this in precise mechanical accordance with the notation? The question seems absurd to those who have really exerted themselves to dive down deep into the recesses of his mind. [His love of the abstract gave him a natural preference for *seeing* the ideas before him in their primitive form. But we may rely that he would not be content without also *hearing* their effect; and, in order to do that, he must have disposed them differently under his fingers.] In short, he was kind to the weaker brethren where he felt there was a danger of

their not being able to get the notes *at all*; but he was a veritable martinet in cases where they could easily get them and the only question was their suitable arrangement. Whether he was right or wrong we will not discuss; but at all events he treated that as a subordinate question, and left it to those whom it most concerned. Had he known that, years afterwards, it was destined to give his admirers great concern, he might have acted differently; but let us at least be thankful that, in this superficial age, there is at all events one master upon whom we can fall back, and say that he gave us all that was best of the new school without sacrificing the old.

60. The reader may readily forgive this exuberance; for it is not to be allowed to obscure the practical question—which is this. The six bars in question can be *quite easily* played, with the full melodic expression of each part in the canon, with the added thirds necessary for completion of the upper part, and with the *pp* touch necessary for the bass by those who will take the pains to find out how to do it. It is admittedly unfortunate that the notation does not indicate the means; but against that it is claimed that the music is inherently worth the trouble. Some day (in the next generation probably judging by the rate at which things travel) this will be found out; and then, everybody will be playing these beautiful things and laughing at the stupidity of those who could not appreciate them, just as we look and laugh at the fashions of a past period. In the meantime here they are, under our very noses; and we not only pass them by but look upon the master who produced them as “outré,” or something of the kind.

61. But, enough. Sufficient to this chapter is the polemical trend thereof; and we will now calmly proceed to the classification for which the prosaic reader has been too long kept in waiting. Should it appear to present a family likeness with that usually made of the works of other composers, he is asked to believe that this, far from being an imitation, is yielded to unwillingly; and only because the nature of the works leaves no alternative. It is, of course, in accordance with the scheme already outlined in Chapter I; being as follows:

# I. SYMPHONIC (1853-6).

Three Sonatas (Op. 1, 2, 5); Scherzo (Op. 4); Variations (Op. 9); Three Ballads and Intermezzo (Op. 10).



## II. TECHNICAL (1861-6).

Variations (two sets, Op. 21); Variations (Op. 24); Variations (two sets, Op. 35).

Addenda: First Concerto (Op. 15); Variations for four hands (Op. 23); and Valses (Op. 39).

## III. CONTEMPLATIVE (1879-80; 1892-3).

Eight Clavierstücke (Op. 76); Two Rhapsodies (Op. 79); Seven Fantasias (Op. 116); Three Intermezzi (Op. 117); Six Clavierstücke (Op. 118); Four Clavierstücke (Op. 119).

62. First period.—Never in the whole history of music were first works so completely representative of their composer; and, as events have proved, so epitomical of his entire career. Other composers have changed the venue in course of events; employing their powers upon ambitions with which their earlier works stood but little in agreement. In Brahms, on the other hand, it would be difficult to point to any characteristic of the later works, the germ of which is not to be found in those of this first period. It will suffice to mention only a few traits in order to point the truth of this. Here in the very first sonata (the one which, as Huneke puts it, caused Schumann to “rub his eyes”) we have proof of:

1. Keeness of rhythmical sense, and an evident reliance upon the power of such refinements.
2. Virile contrasts of tonality, against conventions as to key relationship.
3. Bodily uplifting of the phrase, without recognition of any question of harmonic incongruity therefrom resulting.
4. Archaic note successions, used melodically.
5. Contemptuous treatment of the position of the bar-line.
6. Horizontal treatments in counterpoint.

63. Such a formidable array of revolutionary traits might feasibly cause the timid reader some alarm. But nothing is easier than to reassure him; for, side by side with the above we have:

1. Complete observance of symmetry in form.

2. Speciality of logical development.
3. Love of folk-song, as exhibited in the choice of it as thematic material.
4. As much observance of conventional tenet as an extreme originality coupled with a warm romanticism renders possible.

64. It has already been said that the works of this first period are representative of their composer's entire career; and this is not only true, but even, to some extent, in the sense of vitiating the classification. For amongst this early series there are creations which seem to presage what was destined to follow; and to approximate with embarrassing closeness to those of the later periods. There are the Variations, Op. 9, and the Ballads, Op. 10, which show a respective leaning to the "technical" and "contemplative" periods. It would however be easy to show that such affinity as may be lies in the *basis* rather than in the execution of these works. Both became altered in later years; but for the moment both could not alter simultaneously. The disposition to make a change was the result of the Trio, Op. 8 (which so far remained in the composer's affection that he remodelled it many years afterwards) and the change was first revealed in poetic intention, whilst the mode of working remained the same. He had as yet experienced merely a foretaste of what could be done with greater resources; sufficient however to enable him to realise that symphonic ideas might elsewhere be placed to better advantage. So, whilst still unprepared to handle the clavier in any different sense, he bade adieu to it in the form of ballades—ballades which will never be equalled until some equally great composer bids a temporary farewell to his clavier in the like circumstance.

## CHAPTER V.

### FIRST PERIOD. THE "SYMPHONIC."

65. The first period of the Brahms piano works is described as "symphonic"—firstly, in virtue of its orchestral character. But it is doubtful whether, when the expression is used, it exactly conveys what is intended in this particular case. It would indeed be scarcely too much to say that no single expression could possibly convey the meaning here in view with anything like an approach to precision; for the simple reason that, though there are works of orchestral character for the piano in abundance, none resemble those of Brahms; and it is not therefore with the mere orchestral character in general that we have to deal, but with the peculiar phase of it which these works exhibit.

66. Now the mere fact of this orchestral character would not in itself constitute any remarkable feature. Not only is solidity of structure an orchestral feature in itself and therefore a trait in common evidence with all good music for the instrument, but there have been other celebrated composers whose piano works have had a special leaning in this same direction. Those of Weber, for example, might be quoted as peculiarly apt in displaying the piano's orchestral capacity, but without our being enabled on that account to brace them with those of Brahms; even in respect of the particular trait which both might be regarded as possessing in common. Let us enquire why this is.

67. Although the works of Weber for the piano are decidedly orchestral (albeit considerably more dramatic than those of Brahms) this character is maintained by distinctly conventional means. Weber by no means disdains the use of stereotyped figurations—on the contrary, it is a great merit of his work that he turns them to such effective account. His orchestra is

adroitly "pianised" for the occasion; the residue of weight being only such as could not possibly be avoided. It is therefore more in character and intent that his works are to be described as orchestral—not in actual working; in which latter respect everything is of the most practical nature.

68. But with Brahms it is altogether the other way. He seems as it were to take his parts direct from the orchestra, to range them upon two staves in a short score, to prune them sufficiently for a two-hand possibility, and then to walk quietly away, leaving the player to emerge from the task as best he may.

69. The case against him seems therefore to be all too obvious. And, we must admit that if it ended there—if, in fact, the case were one of insufficient painstaking, and of works being presented in unsuitable form—it would be hard indeed to take up an opposite view. But our dilemma is that these works, with all their supposed defects of outward dress, have a *splendid effect* when pianists are found to take the pains thoroughly to execute them. They introduce us to something entirely new; causing us to wonder whether all these conventional figurations for the piano do not really represent a wrong path. The keenest intellects were quick to note that Brahms was not only new in his conceptions but that he stipulated for novelty in mode of execution; and twenty years ago, Sir Hubert Parry wrote that: "The way in which Brahms treats the piano is quite different from the usages of other composers, and players have to accustom themselves to new ways of using their hands, and their heads as well, before they can master his works."

70. We may therefore remark of the orchestral trait that it differs essentially from the corresponding feature in other composers (as proceeding from causes entirely different) and that it is intimately associated with new views of piano technique.

71. The causes here referred to as leading to this new exhibition of the symphonic feature in relation to the piano belong to the character of the man himself, which forbade any engagement in the ordinary struggle to produce effect. Times out of number we may observe the most patent opportunities for display disdainfully passed by, and thereby conclude that, in the Brahms view, the thought itself was the only "effect" entitled to consideration. In the result therefore every note is integral. There are voices which are principal and others which are subordinate—as in the orchestra. There are amplifications,

either in motion or in volume—as in the orchestra. But of elaboration, pure and simple, there is never a sign.

72. The working out of these principles is alone sufficient to account for much of the difficulty encountered in performance; for pianists are so accustomed to a certain modicum of *poudre aux yeux* in the compositions which form their programmes that they are naturally inclined to resent the absence of it. But the earnest student will derive encouragement as well as find his work simplified by knowing, that he has to regard every note as integral to the sense.

73. We have spoken of "amplifications"; and the term might easily be imagined to include those ingenious pianistic configurations of nothingness to which we are all too accustomed—*only*, such is not the case. The amplifications in these works are only made use of when really wanted; and are then effected in the most direct and elementary manner. The result is that they are sometimes quite childishly simple and appear to be in altogether strange company with such abstruse surroundings. But woe betide the unwary player who deems that he may therefore proceed with negligence. Let him beware of every accompaniment-form, however innocent looking may be its first appearance; for Brahms will not be deterred by any technical considerations from doubling it—or widening its intervals—or from, even after that, giving him cross rhythms to play against it. *Noblesse oblige*; and, where the honour and integrity of the musical thought is the only standard recognised, we must fain accept the consequences.

74. The symphonic character attributed to this first period applies in the strongest sense to the three sonatas and scherzo. In all these works there is abundant evidence of an insatiable earnestness—an earnestness to which one or two extremes are undoubtedly to be set down. But, even if we knew nothing of the composer, we could easily read in these works the earnestness to do well for its own sake; and not that other earnestness which we know so well, and which merely means a zeal in getting on. Brahms had all his life an aversion to ceremony, and his feelings required to be considerably engaged before he became tempted to associate any specific title or poetic quotation with his work. Only once in later life did this occur\*—in

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\* Another instance however appertains to the present period, and is in support of the same view. It is that of No. 1 of the Ballades, Op. 10

the case of the lovely cradle song, Op. 117, No. 1, to which he prefixed the couplet from Herder's folk-songs :

“Schlaf sanft, mein Kind  
 Schlaf sanft und schön!  
 Mich dauert's sehr  
 Dich weinen seh'n.”

75. But in these three early sonatas each one of the slow movements is inspired by a poem; two out of the three cases being declared, and the other reposing on the authority of Dietrich. The first is on the volkslied :

“Verstohlen geht der mond auf  
 Blau, blau, Blümelein.”

the second (as we are told by Dietrich) is on another volkslied :

“Mir ist leide,”

and the third is from Sternau :

“Der Abend dämmt  
 Das Mondlicht scheint  
 Da sind zwei Herzen  
 In Liebe vereint.”

76. The same earnestness is also evidenced by the frequent recourse to scientific device; and the greatness of the composer could never be better shown than by his entirely successful treatment of such temptations. There is no period so dangerous to the work of any writer as that in which he is beset by a craving to do something marvellously clever. Even Brahms has not succeeded in concealing this craving; for we see it unmistakably in the organ-point towards conclusion of first movement of Op. 1, or in the bass subject in augmentation near the end of Op. 2—to quote no other instances. His weakness is shown in suffering like temptations with ourselves; but he

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(q.v.), admitted to have been inspired by a poem called “Edward,” from Herder's Folk Songs, though not headed by any extract from the same.

makes the occasion one for a display of strength by the masterful manner in which he issues from the ordeal. There will always be some to look upon episodes such as those quoted as blemishes of the works in which they are found; but, though it may be true that they contain an undue exuberance, the faithfulness of their translation of the musical thought cannot be denied. That, after all, is the artistic test; and, if we are to hear these passages blamed, therefore, it is but reasonable to ask that it should be by those who are able to play them—a stipulation calculated to narrow the circle of critics considerably.

77. Less symphonic in conception but equally orchestral in treatment are the remaining works of this period—the Variations, Op. 9, and four ballades. The lesser breadth in outline has naturally influenced the range of development, but never were the narrow limits of the variation form displayed to greater advantage than in the first of these works—a grateful offering by the young composer to Mme. Schumann, his friend. Brimful of science, yet free as air, they charm even the ordinary listener by their variety. But, in relation to our present subject, they stand as the institution of the "philosophic variation" in which Brahms afterwards became so famous. It is characteristic of variations of this type that we seem as if we could never tire of them, and the reason is not far to seek. They twine so gently round the parent theme that we are enabled to couple their expression with that of our own mood; and nothing is so difficult as to play them twice alike. They remind one of the dicta of the great moralists to whose pages we can always turn for consolation, and trace ever fresh meanings in words with which we have been long familiar. We see therefore how truly Brahms, in relinquishing the larger forms for piano solo, provided himself with an antidote for all regrets.

78. The concluding works of this period (the three Ballades and Intermezzo, Op. 10) show a constant diminution of orchestral feature as they proceed. Not alone of orchestral feature, but science too is almost allowed to go by the board; which, considering its display in Op. 9, makes the contrast remarkable. None of these features have, however, any importance of signification for those who really know the composer. The diminution of orchestral feature in the ballades is simply due to the nature of their subjects; and there can be little doubt that the subjects in their turn owe their respective

distinction in character to poetic influences. The immediate inspiration for the last three of these ballades may not be clear, but the certainty and character of it is crystal-clear to all who, playing—at the same time really enter into them. Their richness in points of instructive and interesting detail is outside the scope of a chapter dealing only generally with the first period; but some reference may nevertheless be allowed to their perfection as “ballades,” considering that so many works are thus named without apparent justification. It may no doubt be granted that time has brought about the recognition of new meanings; but to Brahms, at all events, the *epic* character of the ballade was ideal. He was only destined to write one other (the No. 3 of Op. 118); but, although that was nearly forty years afterwards, it answers entirely the same description. Moreover, in this very set there is one of less development and more fugitive character, which, being numbered with the others, is often called “ballade,” though Brahms has named it “Intermezzo.” As we have seen in the Sonatas, and again in the Variations, so we now see again in the Ballades, and shall presently be able to observe in works of the remaining periods—that his convictions, once formed, were never afterwards departed from.



## CHAPTER VI.

### SECOND PERIOD. THE "TECHNICAL."

79. If the variation-form may be considered "technical" for the executant, it is no less technical for the composer. Like the scale from the executive point of view, which can *somehow* be played by the merest pupil—but which requires a master for its finished performance, the variation-form may be easily filled by an ordinary student—though the "philosophic variation" alluded to in the last chapter is ever of the rarest.

80. A period in the work of any composer which is exclusively devoted to this form must, providing a proper standard of creativeness be maintained, be therefore of strenuous character. It constitutes the frankest and manliest course which any writer can adopt, because it affords no room for shelter from any shortcomings; no *locus pœnitentiæ*. All must be put into few notes, and is so quickly past and done with that, unless the composer really has something to say and proceeds with it at once, the verdict he thus challenges is sure to go against him.

81. One does not need any special warmth in Brahms' favour to admit that, in the Variation, his compeers may be sought in vain. His peculiar genius unquestionably fitted him for a form in which compression of thought was such an advantage. His variations seem as if they were each a quotation from some larger work; but one so happily combining leading features as to afford the mind sufficient material for imagining a further course of development. There is no variation which could not easily be taken and amplified into a larger work; nor any two of them which resemble one another, in aught save the one thing—that they have a common basis in their theme.

82. It is desirable to include with the works of this period the Variations for four hands (Op. 23) and the total product may therefore be stated as under:—

Concerto, Op. 15, Maestoso Adagio and Rondo.

Original Theme and eleven Variations, Op. 21a.

Hungarian Theme and thirteen Variations, Op. 21b.

Schumann Theme and ten Variations (four hands), Op. 23.

Handel Theme and twenty-five Variations (Fugue in addition), Op. 24.

Paganini Theme and fourteen Variations (Studies, First Set), Op. 35a.

Paganini Theme and fourteen Variations (Studies, Second Set), Op. 35b.

83. As the last of these appeared in 1866, and the composer's career extended for twenty-three years afterwards, it cannot be said that he was, upon the whole, greatly addicted to the variation form; considering that, in all that time, we have only the

Variations for Orchestra, Op. 56.

Variations in slow movement of Piano Trio, Op. 87.

Variations forming the Passacaglia-Finale of Fourth Symphony, Op. 98;—

but it is significant that he adopted it upon such an important occasion as the last; (which may be considered his greatest orchestral effort) because this is corroborative of the view here taken of the second period of piano work. The same view is also supported by the Concerto which heads the list; for, though this appears exceptional among so many variations, it goes to confirm the generally strenuous character of Brahms' activity at the time.

84. Of this Concerto, as first in order, it will be necessary to make a few general observations, though in one sense they might be all summed up in the one word—"stupendous." Yet, as usual with Brahms-work, it takes some time to form our minds to the reception of its principal thematic material. There is something so uncompromising about it all that, at first, it seems chilly; in the sense that we feel it to consist, not of music designed exactly for our entertainment, but of some-

thing important which Brahms has to say, and which he intends to say whether we like it or not. It will well repay the reader to reflect a little upon this attitude of the composer; because it has everything to do, not only with our appreciation of him individually, but with our opinions of all other creative work. There is the sensuous and self-indulgent view that it is designed for our personal enjoyment; and there is the vigorous and earnest view that it is the *truth*—which the composer dared not adjust to our likings, and still less to our weaknesses. We are free to choose whichever we may prefer; but let it be clearly understood that, if we prefer the former, the music of Brahms is not for us. This accounts for the enormous difference in the reception accorded to his work; for, as the truth is palatable or otherwise according to the subject of which we speak, so is Brahms occasionally so charming to the ordinary listener as to cause him an intense surprise. But those who pick and choose in this way have no better appreciation of what they like than of what they dislike; if they look upon it as designed for the gratification of their senses.

85. We are passing through such a wave of sensuousness at the present time that some are even found to deny intellectuality to music altogether. To such, the history of this Concerto affords a valuable lesson. At the time of its appearance the typical pianoforte concerto existed for the express display of the solo instrument and the equally express subordination of the orchestra. No department of musical literature had been better served; many of the works appertaining to it being ideal in beauty and monumental in greatness. Still, the fact remained that they had been produced under false conditions; and Brahms, the first man who had the courage to speak the truth in this matter, received, of course, nothing but abuse for his pains. But mark well what happened. The truth was unpalatable and was therefore held to be wrong; but the seed had been sown and has, since then, borne rich fruit. We have still our concertos, and still our display of the principal instrument; but that display is no longer express, but *incidental* to the work: in short it appertains entirely to the sense of the message to be delivered, and the force of truth has been such that even composers who have professed a contempt for Brahms and all his ways (such as Tchaïkovsky in his Op. 23) have been constrained to copy him in this particular. If, therefore, the Brahms Concerto is little played at the present

time, it is no longer on account of any want of sympathy with the principles upon which it rests, but on account of its ex-cruciating difficulty—a difficulty which the reader will appreciate as natural, regarding it, as we now do, as the opening of the strenuous period of pianoforte work.

86. The Concerto, therefore, is “technical” from both points of view—from that alike of player and composer; and, in its instance, the composer’s technique has since been so abundantly copied as to become the fashion. But it is instructive (and also amusing) to note how little disposition has been evinced to copy that same technique in evolution of the variation. The difference is clear. In the one case the question involved was merely that of a *modus operandi*. Important and far-reaching as we have seen it to be it nevertheless did not infringe upon the subject-matter itself, but merely upon the way in which that subject-matter was to be treated. In the variation, on the contrary, it was the faculty of introspection, which stood in request; and it is not so much that this faculty is rare, as that the *entourage* of most composers stands in opposition to its cultivation. Even at the risk of appearing dogmatic the aphorism may be ventured that “whoever is sensitive to criticism will not write good variations.” A classic variation requires to be much played before its inwardness becomes apparent; but, after that, it becomes a joy to its possessor. After-effects are in this case in absolute opposition to first impressions—indeed nothing could better betoken a variation of the wish-wash order than that it should be instantly appreciated. But the critic is far too superior a person to require any special equipment; and, if he is to be propitiated, the motto must be—“Introspection avaunt!” Matters have even gone so far that the critic’s infallibility is now conferred upon the man in the street, who is supposed to decree off-hand whether a work is good or not by the impression it produces upon him. Farther from Brahms it would be impossible to go.

87. Only Beethoven and Bach are in the category of variationists to which Brahms belongs. But, strangely enough, in spite of a reverence almost amounting to adoration of the latter, the former’s influence is more direct upon this department of his work. It is the same in one sense with Wagner; whose outward devotion was principally for Beethoven, but whose actual product was largely subject to the Weber tinge. Whether there is a consciousness on the part of these great ones

of special danger in following too closely the footsteps of those they most love we cannot know, though the comparison of such incidents is apt to beget the idea. But in all such cases, independently of all influence of what has gone before, there is the *new individuality*; which alone is the measure of what the world has gained.

88. These observations may, by the reader's indulgence, be held descriptive of the variations generally until we arrive at the two "Paganini" sets. In all of them, so far, we encounter what may be described as an equal amount of composer's and player's technique; even if the former may not be allowed the preference. This may not be the view of many who play them; but that arises from the fact that such players do not generally attack the difficulties by Brahms methods. The present is not the occasion to refer in detail to that matter, but it may suffice to say that no great muscular exertion is required for any of them; and whoever finds their execution impossible without it, may know thereby that there is something wrong with himself in the matter of method.

89. But, when we come to the Paganini sets, this can no longer be said. Here the executional feature is very distinctly in the foreground, notwithstanding that no allowance has to be made from any of the high qualities of variation-construction already described. There is not only no such allowance to be made, but there is the super-addition of a geometrical feature which has now to be reckoned with; and it is upon the latter that the new technical difficulties are based. These do not occur at all in the ordinary way—not for example as they do in Liszt's "transcendental." Viewed from the geometrical standpoint the passages in which they occur ought not to be difficult at all; for they are generally quite simple in design, so that their *comprehension* offers no difficulty; whilst, even in execution, it generally happens that portions of each form fall under the hand in quite an easy way. The difficulty entirely arises from Brahms' inexorable method of disregarding whatever might stand in his way so far as it appeared to affect the completion of his plans. His device was evidently that "*what ought to be must be*"; and as he thus declines to compound with expediency—*hinc illæ lacrymæ*. It all comes back to what has already been urged against keyboard exigencies; viz., that an instrument possessing the pianoforte's facility of note-production should know nothing of set-forms and finger-habit.

Brahms was not discursive upon the subject; but what he has written is even more eloquent than anything he could have said. Yet, when once he had secured the integrity of his work, there was none more kind than he in bearing with ordinary weakness. Over and over again he has provided an easier reading for his basses, and has even gone the length of leaving notes out which manifestly belonged to his design. Only, in the latter case, he always waits until the case has been sufficiently stated for the intelligent player to have the opportunity of adding them, should he wish to do so.

90. A word should now be said upon the score of artistic and emotional effect—not that such should really be necessary, but because these variations are continually reviewed from that standpoint and silence upon this matter might bear an aspect of evasion. No such line could have been ever taken by anyone familiar with Brahms' fifty-one "Übungen" (Exercises) for he would there have seen the very substance of some of these variations figuring as matter for daily practice. The fact therefore of such a line of criticism being possible at all must really be admitted as proving such writers extremely slow in discovering the scope of a technical work; or else that Brahms has been peculiarly successful in approaching the emotional, notwithstanding his self-imposition of so many geometrical and mechanical conditions. The latter is really the case; and, notwithstanding that these variations have not a directly æsthetic purpose, the masterly handling of the variation compels some effect in this direction; though, of course, not in a degree comparable with that arising in cases where it is the direct object.

91. Appertaining to this period (at all events, chronologically) stand the Valses, Op. 39; written for four hands, but arranged in solo form by the composer himself. They are Brahms' first work of the kind; but, as usual with him, they set the pattern for all that were to follow. Their characteristics are highly peculiar—or perhaps it would be better to refer to such features as no longer so, now that they have become familiar. But this much is certain—these Valses differ materially from those of any other composer. As Huneker puts it, they seem to breathe the open air; emancipating the valse-form from all reminiscence of the ball-room, and suggesting the greensward and rural pleasures. Although the

cadre in which they are cast would appear at first sight to remove them from the "technical" category, their emanation from the same period is obvious from the detail of their arrangement; though, of course, this observation is not intended to apply to the professedly easy version of them made by the composer himself.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THIRD PERIOD. THE "CONTEMPLATIVE."

92. The systematic praise accorded to the Brahms works in these chapters might easily cause the reader to infer a pre-disposition in their favour; and this, no doubt, would in the majority of cases be a right conclusion. But we have to bear in mind the thanklessness of all attempt to discriminate, arising as a consequence of this composer's uniform painstaking and deliberation in all he did. To be able to find an occasional fault would be as serviceable to the open zealot as reassuring to the general reader; but, unfortunately for the captious, the chinks in Brahms' armour are too small to serve such purpose. There is but one qualification for censuring these works—and that is not to understand them.

93. The third or "contemplative" period which we now approach (excluding the remaining concerto and the residue of arrangements and exercises) comprises but six opus numbers; but, as each of these is really a small collection of pieces, and as Brahms' indifference to titles leads him often to repeat the same heading, it will give the reader a better general idea to offer him a classified list; as under—

Intermezzi, Op. 76, Nos. 3, 4, 6, 7	} 18
„ Op. 116, Nos. 2, 4, 5, 6	
„ Op. 117, Nos. 1, 2, 3	
„ Op. 118, Nos. 1, 2, 4, 6	
„ Op. 119, Nos. 1, 2, 3	
Capriccios, Op. 76, Nos. 1, 2, 5, 8	} 7
„ Op. 116, Nos. 1, 3, 7	
Rhapsodies, Op. 79, Nos. 1, 2	} 3
„ Op. 119, No. 4	
Ballade, Op. 118, No. 3	1
Romance, Op. 118, No. 5	1



94. The title "intermezzo" has been uniformly applied to the pieces of more meditative character, the prevailing degree of movement being "Andante," and the Romance really appertaining to this category, though bearing a distinctive title. The "Capriccios" are all in quicker movement, generally "Allegro"; and if, on that account, we range with them the Rhapsodies and Ballade, we have these thirty pieces divided in accordance with their sentiment (as indicated by the degree of speed) into nineteen slow and eleven quicker movements. Of these the Rhapsodies are subjected to the greatest development; then follow the Capriccios; and the Intermezzi are all short—none exceeding one hundred bars, and the smallest falling below fifty. This, as far as mere quantity is concerned, is all we have to deal with; though it is quite another matter to dwell upon the wealth of conception contained within those modest limits. That very wealth has been made a matter of reproach to these pieces—the only one that ever has been made. It has been said by Billroth that, beautiful as are these shorter compositions, it is to be doubted whether they will ever gain such universal and unreserved affection as has long since been accorded to those of Schumann and Chopin. He adds that the manner in which the thoughts are expressed sometimes seems out of proportion to the moderate length of their development; the height of the structure to be, as it were, too great in comparison with the superficial area allotted to it. The sincerity of this criticism must be thoroughly admitted. The facts upon which it bears are obvious, and admit of no dispute. The conclusion also which he draws therefrom, that these pieces will never become so universally appreciated as those of Schumann and Chopin may also be partly granted—*partly*, because it depends upon the general spread of musical cultivation. But any lack of universality in their reception will be always more than compensated for by the ardent love with which they inspire those to whom they are an open book, and it is the purpose of the observations which now follow to make this plain. As Fuller-Maitland says in Grove, these later pieces reveal a "new world" to the pianist; and the expression is not too strong. It is also sufficiently expressive for those who already know this music, but to those who do not, it may be hoped that the following will be of service.

95. To form an idea of this "Brahms school"—for it is no less—we have first to imagine the unconventionality of the

works of the earliest period, without their symphonic striving. The kind of work committed to the pianist's finger is still the same, but it is not presented in the same intensity of form; and the difference does not arise as some critics have imagined from any relenting on the part of Brahms—from any perception that he had been previously in error, or anything of that sort—but from the difference in the artistic object which he had now in view. The mere prevalence of the slow movement in the works of this period would alone be sufficient to indicate the kind of change which had taken place. It is no longer the ardent youth pressing forward to a strenuous career and eagerly seizing the first means at his command; but the hero of many triumphs in a totally different field, communing with the companion of his early struggles.

96. The first quality which arrests attention is accordingly the rare combination of fine musicianship with self-abnegation. In every line the past-master may be traced, in every bar we are conscious of the composer's power; but it is not exerted to the full, there is no ambition to make effect; the whole seeming like some portentous dictum delivered in gentle tones. This is what Billroth made a defect, and he was quite within the bounds of a legitimate criticism in doing so. But we have all learned something since then, for it is a new style which Brahms has thus revealed. He has taught us that the same power of introspection which he employed in rendering each variation a complete composition in itself could be used independently of connection with any set thematic basis—or, if not that, without any revelation of such basis. The reason for the last remark is that it has been sometimes thought that a thematic basis for some of these pieces may have existed. They have so much the air of hovering round something unknown, that now, at last, we understand why development was not to be looked for. There was a time when its absence seemed to cause a gap. Now, we should regard its presence as an intrusion; for we know these pieces to be perfect as they are.

97. The various remaining characteristics of these "contemplative" works do not depend upon the above theory; but they are, at all events, in perfect accord with it. The uniformity of style which pervades each piece is one trait of the kind. Even in the few cases where the length appears to impose the necessity of contrast, the change is merely as from one variation to another; always excepting, of course, the

Rhapsodies, which form a case apart. So far as we are borne aloft at all it seems to be by some unseen influence; and as if our momentary exultation were not caused by our own joys, but were the result of sympathy—in short, the reflex of a corresponding rise in some theme unknown. It must be obvious that considerable musical equipment is necessary for *listening* to such music, the perceptions requiring to be called into play for its perfect appreciation being of the very finest description. No composer has suffered so much as Brahms from the pernicious notion that everyone is able to judge; because none have been so indifferent as he as to whether the ignorant cared for him or not.

98. It is also consonant with the same view that the *individual note* should be of such distinctive value. One need not be a purist to perceive how delightful it is (and especially for the player who is himself a creative artist) to have to deal with a composer whose every dictated sound goes straight to its point; being neither obscured by an impertinent complication, nor encumbered by a crowd of trivial auxiliaries. It seems strange that in this twentieth century an aphoristic musical language should still be not only a new thing, but that, on whichever side we turn, we should be confronted by instances of its utter negation. The ambitious musician nowadays would pooh-pooh the notion of "making the least of much"; for his object is rather how to "make the most of little." Wisdom is justified by her children; and those who have little are well entitled to make the most of it. But it also lies within the fitness of things that pearls of musical conception should be treasured by the connoisseur; and, for him, the later Brahms pieces form the very acme of enjoyment.

99. The next quality which contributes to this result is really the outcome of the foregoing, and consists in the delightful way in which this music responds to varieties of touch. A moment's thought will suffice to realise that where every note is integral to the sense the interpretation will require a constant graduation of force. In the early period this requirement could only be partially fulfilled on account of the complications in which the youthful composer had permitted himself to indulge. The same quality was there, but, to the player, it was more a theoretic than a practical existence; the most he could hope to do being to graduate in force the main flow of the ideas to be expressed. It is therefore principally in the

works of the later period that the beauty of this characteristic is really felt. Of them it may be truly said (and especially of those from Op. 116 to the end) that they constitute a perfect "school of touch" in which whatever mechanical aptitude we may have acquired is instinctively assisted by the ideal suggestion which the phrase itself contains.

100. The same restraint on the composer's part which has rendered possible the very finest graduations of touch has also brought into prominence the effect of being released from the servility of obedience to conventional pianistic figurations. These have now been so variously tortured in the desire to give them a new dress (as some partial relief to the nausea they create probably) that the faculty of being free of them altogether for a time and of having nothing but real music to listen to comes as a boon to the jaded performer. There is but one sad moment in connection with these pieces, and that is when, arriving at the end of them, the consciousness supervenes that it would be vain to look for more. We do not feel the same regret at the non-extension of the first period; because the sonatas were not only continued, but considerably improved upon, in the subsequent chamber music. But, even if the composer had been still spared to us, there would have been no field open to him to improve upon these pieces; he could only have given us more of the same kind.

101. The reader may well conceive that, when the time comes to speak of them in detail, there will be much to say of their individual contents. The present observations are merely of the nature of a general survey and as indicative of the fact that notwithstanding the mountains of piano literature which exist, notwithstanding the towering excellence of much of it in other departments of musical expression we have here the nucleus of a new school entirely differing from all that has gone before—one so entirely reposing upon innate musical truth and beauty that, however much a present superficiality of view may cause it to be neglected, its further cultivation is as sure as that the sparks fly upward. The occultism which pervades it, its condensation of material, and above all the onus which it throws upon the listener of coming prepared with an adequate musical equipment, will always, doubtless, narrow the circle of its admirers. To suppose that such music could at once become popular in the vulgar sense would be to suppose that humanity could suddenly make an advance of which it

would be wild to dream. But its cult progresses nevertheless and the indifference of the crowd is at least partially atoned for by the ardency of the neophyte.

102. The classification offered in Chapter III has now been explained, and it may be hoped justified. Small in respect of quantity as was the output of Brahms for his favourite instrument, he presents himself to us in the course of it as three distinct masters. The one quality which unites these styles so outwardly distinct is that of concentration. In the first we had the concentration of what was really symphonic for clavier-interpretation. In the second we had the compression of thought peculiar to the classic variation-form, associated with the same technical ardour as before. And in the third we have a concentration of thought untrammelled either by thematic or technical problems. The rarity of piano works produced during that period of the composer's life when his services to the instrument would have been so valuable seems to have been due to his regarding this form of composition as subordinate to higher purposes, whilst the modest pretensions of the pieces themselves tend to the conclusion that he regarded them somewhat as fugitive emanations of his pen. But not even the greatest genius is aware of the exact relative value of his productions; and great, upon the whole, as were those of Brahms, sufficient has been said to show that a place of honour among them is due to the pianoforte works.



## PART II.

### (B) THE HANDBOOK.

#### OP. 1. SONATA IN C, NO. 1, FOR PIANOFORTE SOLO.

Dedicated to Joseph Joachim.

ALLEGRO : ANDANTE : SCHERZO : FINALE.

#### I. ALLEGRO.

103. *Key, time and extent.*—In C; (changing to C minor and B minor) Allegro; time, common; 273 bars (being 90 for first section inclusive of 2 for 2da Volta; 85 for Development, commencing in C minor and modulating through B minor to the return; and 98 for Repetition groups and Coda.

104. *Thematic material.*—First subject in C; of march-like character, generally held to be reminiscent of Beethoven's Op. 106; the inference being that the youthful Brahms had, as an ardent virtuoso, made a special study of Beethoven's great work and thus become unconsciously impressed.

Second subject in A minor; a graceful Cantabile, occurring also in C minor during the Return, but remaining on both occasions undeveloped. Its material however enters copiously into the Development, where it is worked with great skill.

Third subject in A minor; "poco ritenuto," occurring also in C minor during the return; of combined march-like and cantabile character, somewhat of the nature of a March-Trio; an evolution from second subject, with which it is adroitly intermingled; used also in C minor for commencement of the

Development; also in F sharp minor for commencement of the Coda.



The Examples being merely provided for purposes of identification are necessarily restricted both in detail and extent to what is necessary for that purpose.

105. *Melody*.—The general melodic contour is much influenced by the freedom in modulation, and the opening sentences show at once that Brahms is not sensitive upon the subject of tonal progressions, the second period (bar 9)\* opening in B flat with fine effect, though somewhat embarrassing to ears accustomed to a longer sojourn in the parent key.

106. The peculiarities of melodic progression consist largely of note-successions likely to appear harsh, and are largely due to the restless tonality of the first subject; which, commencing in C, passes into F, returns to C, modulates into G, and transforms the latter into G minor—all within the space of eight bars. As the return to C and the modulation to G are both effected by a melodic thrusting forward of the leading notes of those keys, a crudity seems to result. Familiarity however causes these successions to appear quite differently and to assume rather the character of manliness and heroism. Thus the feature of first flattening the seventh only to restore it to its natural pitch immediately afterwards is like a momentary despondency and quick resolution; and appertains to a style of melody both unconventional and dependent upon harmonisation for its full meaning.

107. The melody of the second subject is so graceful that the fact of its period being unprovided with cadence appears disappointing; the contrast which its introduction was designed to effect thus remaining incomplete. In lieu of Cadence we have the presentation of a feature which is one of Brahms'

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\* The student should number the commencing bar of *each line* in his copy.



peculiarities :—one which it is highly necessary that the reader should take great pains to understand, as not only an intellectual comprehension but an artistic sympathy will be promoted thereby. This feature occurs at the second half of bar 50; and consists of the melody being, as it were, bodily uplifted a semitone. It is difficult for the ordinary listener to regard such chromaticisms as the result of an earnestness of expression and vigour of utterance, such as causes the voice to be raised in speaking. But, if we persist in regarding these Northern characteristics otherwise than as they appertain to primitive ideas of the communication of human feeling, we shall entirely fail to seize the meaning of the music in many instances. The result, for example, in this case, of regarding the second half of bar 50 as an integral chord of B dominant would be that we should have to suffer the harshness of the tonal progression (B dom., A minor) in passing to bar 51 for third subject—a harshness which disappears with an intellectual appreciation of the passage.

108. A fine example of this chromatic uplifting of the melody occurs at the last return to the natural key (bar 241); not in consequence of any novel feature but because the frankness of its employment enables the application to be so easily perceived. Here the third subject which, in ordinary course, should appear in F minor is bodily raised; appearing in F sharp minor with something of the effect of a freshening breeze.

109. An application of the same principle in reversal also occurs. This is towards the close of the first section (bars 65 to 70), where the merged second and third subjects, which are really in A minor, ostensibly modulate into E flat. But mark the different effect upon our minds, according to the way in which we read this. To take it as an integral key-change is to find the composer erratic, and as actuated by the purposeless pursuit of novelty. But to accept it as indicated above is to recognise only that a softened light has been cast upon the subject—a passing ray which, with the entry of bar 71, has disappeared, leaving us in A minor, precisely as before.

110. In such matters the thing most to be remembered is that music which is true to Nature is not designed to serve the exigencies of our harmonic system; but that, on the contrary, it is the latter which must be subservient to whatever a natural expression demands.

111. *Harmony*.—The modulative character of the first subject imparts a trait of harmonic restlessness to the entire movement; the momentary repose offered by second and third subjects (bars 39 to 64 and on repetition) being insufficient to change the general tone. Excess in the amount of change is however redeemed; partly by adroit management of the progressions, and partly by the coherence resulting from formal symmetry.

112. Progressions of merely normal interest may be fairly left to the reader's own discernment; but he may be specially directed to notice bars 3 and 4 of the third subject wherever occurring, in which the minor scale is harmonised, in descending, in accordance with its own signature; but, in ascending, with a frank acceptance of that of its major dominant. Also, bars 9-10 and 11-12 of the Development; where the harmony of D flat intervenes between that of C minor and its dominant. Also, the changes to which the harmony of A dominant with added ninth is subjected for the purpose of effecting the Return—a masterly effect produced by simple means.

113. *Rhythm*.—Throughout the entire works of Brahms the rhythmical feature is one of extreme importance; and here, at the threshold of the whole subject, the student must, once for all, become aware that the composer's treatment of the bar-line is in some sense analogous to that of his melodic inflections. We have already seen something of his manner of uplifting his melody as a means of expression and of our liability to misinterpret this feature. We shall now find that he treats the bar-line very much in the same way; and that, if we attribute to it a rhythmical significance we shall incur an equal liability to misconstrue his sentences.

114. The general importance of this characteristic trait renders it necessary to lay stress upon it in introducing this first work; notwithstanding that the latter does not present it in any emphasised form. It is however unmistakably present; as may be perceived by reference to bar 67 (also 229), where the passage commencing upon third beat is rhythmically a full-bar entry; and where, therefore, according to conventional notions, the bar-line would appear to come in the wrong place. The second half of bar 70, being devoted to an echo-like repetition, causes the bar-line to regain its former position; and, in the result, we have a visible three bars for that which is rhythmically only two. The reader must therefore clearly under-

stand that Brahms' music must at all times be rhythmised independently of any reference to bar-lines.

115. The rhythm of this movement is duple throughout; extensions of the phrase being also duple. But this only applies to such extensions as are integral; for Brahms has a constant habit of what may be described as the "written-out pause" and another which may be stated as the "rallentando in notation"—each of which, though affecting the number of bars, and consequently imparting an aspect of complication to the phrase, have nothing to do with the rhythm at all. Thus, during the first section (bars 71-5) we have an ostensible five-bar phrase which is really one of four bars only, the last two bars being a rallentando in notation; and it will be an improving exercise to the student to seek out other instances.

116. *Figuration*.—Brahms makes very little use of the filigree kind of figuration of which pianoforte composers are generally so fond; and his independence in this respect is a principal cause of his music being regarded as "unpianistic." It is not however he who is unpianistic; but, rather, the players who, by enslaving their hands to the practice of set forms, sacrifice the facility of note-production which the instrument naturally possesses. It is in this way that pianoforte music is degraded by reduction of its abstract contents to such poor limits; the deficiency being covered by figurations, which, however graceful and ingenious, can never compensate for lack of actual significance. Brahms appears to disdain such devices in a general sense; only using them where their subordinate character favours the poetical design. There will accordingly be very little to mention under this heading in most cases; and, in the present movement, the only instances which occur consist of the plain accompaniments to second and third subjects.

117. *Form*.—The Brahms works are so symmetrical generally that reference to formal features in detail would constantly lead to repetition of the same observations. Interest therefore principally attaches to such modifications as he introduces from time to time for æsthetic purposes; but of these, in the present movement, no instances occur, and in such cases the bar-distribution as indicated in the opening paragraph will be a sufficient guide.

118. *General characteristics*.—In common with all the works of the first period the present movement is essentially orchestral. To this fact is due not only the technical difficulty

arising from note-accumulation, but the embarrassment sometimes caused to the player by having to deal with unwonted progressions. In such cases the difficulty is rather of brain-direction than of finger-capacity; as an instance of which the reader may refer to the canon with which the Development opens and in which he will probably experience a hesitation caused, not by the actual notes, but by the horizontal treatment. Something of the same kind occurs in milder form in connection with the little fugato beginning with bar 17.

119. The movement is in fact so orchestral that but few minutes would suffice to apply a suitable instrumentation to the whole of it. This feeling should be encouraged with a view to a sympathetic rendering. As a hundred instances could not exhaust the subject a sample is merely offered in the "timpani" roll (bar 139 and following) where the characteristic drum *sforzando* should be in mind. With mention of this one case the reader must be left to apply the "ex uno" principle to the remainder. Finally, let him note the rich organ-point at bar 254 and following.

## II. ANDANTE.

120. *Key, time and extent.*—In C minor (changing to C major) Andante (Adagio at final cadence); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$  (occasional  $\frac{3}{16}$  and  $\frac{4}{16}$ ); 86 bars, being 57 for the theme and its treatment in minor, 15 for treatment in major, and 14 for Codetta, also in major.

121. *Thematic material.*—The theme is an old German love-song entitled "Verstohlen geht der Mond auf" ("Now slyly doth the moon rise"), being No. 49 of the "Deutsche Volkslieder,"\* and forming part of the sub-collection for solo voice (Vorsänger) and small chorus.

122. The verse consists of seven lines, the full setting being first given in plain form; and, although an abundant interest is sustained throughout the movement, no fresh material is employed, save during the short Codetta. The subject of the latter is however so reminiscent of the opening phrase that it can scarcely be considered as new.

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\* For particulars of this collection see the Vocal Works volume.

123. The steadfastness of Brahms' love of folk-song is well exemplified in his having chosen this melody alike to form the material of his first slow movement and to be the crowning item of his great collection published forty years afterwards. Another form of steadfastness, too, is exhibited in this choice of a choral specimen; and we may here perceive his early predilection for effects which were afterwards so gloriously embodied in the Requiem and motets.



124. *Melody*.—Although, during the first section, this consists of the folk-song only, the whole movement is one in which special melodic features abound. Thus, the second setting commences at bar 14; and, at its two cadences (bars 21 and 26), the voice is again uplifted, after the manner described as occurring in the first movement. The rise in the first instance is of a semitone, and, in the second, of a tone; after which there is, in each case, a return to the normal position. This feature prominently appears again during the second setting (at the choral phrases, bars 44 and 52) in each case a delightful earnestness of melodic expression being the result. Yet this form of melodic charm is so dependent upon harmonisation that, in absence of the latter, instead of an increased eloquence we should have a distortion of the theme. This fact is particularly to be noted; as it relates to an appreciation without which we shall remain at sea in all that concerns this composer—appreciation, that is, of melody, harmony and rhythm which are all entirely interdependent.

125. If any evidence were required to show the intent with which the above effect was introduced we should find it in the fact that it has its counterpart at bar 7 of the major section, where, instead of an increased exultance, a hushed effect of the most lovely description is produced by application of the same

process in reversal. Such melodies must not be confounded with mere tunes. They not only have no power to suggest their own harmonies;† but any attempt to harmonise them according to the parent key would be fatal; as their essential beauty lies in the frank acceptance of whatever tonality is represented by the uplifting or depression of the melody, as the case may be. Brahms usually contrives to score a dual advantage in this way; for, after the loveliness of the original change, we have an equal gratification in store at the return. (See bar 9 of major section.)

126. The florid melody reared above the theme in the third setting (commencing at bar 27), and which is transferred to the bass at bar 35, constitutes a variation, not of vapid figuration, but of sustained interest; whilst the melodic beauty of the Codetta offers a perfect example of the interdependence of melody, harmony and rhythm already alluded to.

127. *Harmony*.—It appertains to the last observation that the harmonic features of this movement are principally induced by the melodic changes. Thus, at bar 21, the sudden change to D flat is caused by the melodic inflection in the previous bar. The sudden return to the key at bar 22 is another point of interest; both features being again presented at bars 25 and 26 respectively. Another point worthy of mention is the written-out pause at bars 17 and 26 in which the cadence derives special effect from a lugubrious harmonisation of the tonic.

128. The streak of sound represented by the D flat running through the three  $\frac{3}{16}$  bars (48 to 50) and the similar E flat shortly afterwards (bars 52 to 54) is worthy also of remark, not from any special importance in this instance, but for future reference, as we shall meet with it elsewhere.

129. *Rhythm*.—Only subordinate traits are presented—generally such as are connected with Brahms' free handling of the bar-line. Thus, the written-out pauses at bars 17 and 26 give occasion for extra bars. At bar 47 a bolder treatment occurs; for, there, an ordinary  $\frac{3}{4}$  bar is transformed into four—or one of  $\frac{4}{16}$  and three of  $\frac{3}{16}$ . The same thing occurs again at bar 51; and we have thus four time-changes and six additional bar-lines, all for the purpose of elaborating the final crotchets of bars 47 and 51. The passage is therefore useful as showing the futility of relying upon the bar-line for any sort of rhythmical indication.

130. *Figuration*.—In the major section simple figuration becomes somewhat necessary, in order to preserve the semi-quaver motion; as the upper melody does not supply this, and a third real part would have been too severely polyphonic for the character of the movement. This is the only instance of its occurring, its presence being thus easily accounted for.

131. *Form*.—Volkslied of twelve bars, minor key; two subsequent settings in minor (practically variations though proceeding in continuous movement); one major setting, and Codetta. The direction “attaca” for Scherzo to follow seems scarcely requisite, as the cadence is both perfect and reposeful and the whole movement formally complete as it stands.

132. *General characteristics*.—There is a decided “string-quartet” character about the greater part of the movement which the player should express in varieties of touch, and the Pralltriller of the contrapuntal figures require special care on that account. On the other hand, the major section has the character of a “Lied ohne Worte,” with fine opportunity for cantabile.

133. The Codetta is upon an organ-point of the tonic; a canon in the fourth, at one bar distance.

### III. SCHERZO.

134. *Key, time and extent*.—In E minor (changing to C); Allegro molto e con fuoco (changing to “piu mosso” for Trio); time,  $\frac{6}{8}$  (changing to  $\frac{3}{4}$  for Trio); 210 bars, being 102 and 108 for first section and Trio respectively.

135. *Thematic material*.—Each section presents only one subject requiring quotation—in the first case of humorous, and, in the second, of cantabile character.



136. *Melody*.—Subsidiary melodic features are presented by a chromatic uplifting of the melody at bar 17, the change being from B to C; at bar 21, the change being from D to E flat; and at bar 24, the change being from F to F sharp. In each case the harmonies of the new key are at once adopted.

In the Trio we have principally the response of the tenor in dialogue with principal theme; apart from which there are only the usual melodic features resulting from key-change.

137. *Harmony*.—The student must dismiss from notice all abstruse appearance resulting merely from an uplifting of the melody, and regard only the harmonies as they would have been without such change; when he will be surprised at their extreme simplicity. The bass he will also find to be particularly reposeful, and to present three cases of organ-point, commencing at bars 25, 33 and 73 respectively. The harmonies of the Trio are changeful, but are all due to transient modulations.

138. *Rhythm*.—Duple throughout; but modifications of the phrase occur at bars 81 to 84, which are practically in  $\frac{3}{4}$ , and are an augmentation of two ordinary  $\frac{6}{8}$  bars. This is all done for the purpose of enforcing an effect of "fff molto pesante"; and very much the same sort of thing occurs also at bars 79 to 82 of the Trio.

139. Note, also, that bar 62 is a written-out pause; and that the two intermediate bars between first section and Trio may be construed in the same way.

140. *Figuration*.—There is one instance in the alto accompaniment of the Cantabile Trio melody.

141. *Form*.—The ordinary two sections of lyric form; second section unprovided with cadence; and, by effecting the Da capo in a continuous movement, dispensing with Coda.

142. *General characteristics*.—The movement is of technical value, both the wrist work of the first section and the tone-volume graduations of the second affording good study. From bar 91 of the latter the bass foreshadows the return of the first subject and should therefore be punctuated so to fuse the two sections at the D.C.

#### IV. FINALE.

143. *Key, time and extent*.—In C (changing to G and A minor); Allegro con fuoco (concluding with "Presto agitato ma



non troppo"); time,  $\frac{9}{8}$  (frequent changes to  $\frac{6}{8}$ ); 295 bars, including 3 for *ima Volta* in first section.

144. *Thematic material*.—Dietrich accounts for the Scotch character of this movement by telling us that Brahms had, whilst writing it, been thinking of "My heart's in the highlands."



145. *Melody*.—This is greatly varied; and the Caledonian character suggested by Dietrich's account may be said on the whole to be fairly well borne out. The various themes are quite loosely strung together, and are mostly of the Volkslied order; the second subject, however, appearing to be somewhat too delicate for such classification, its under-changing notes especially suggesting artistic refinement. Yet the reel-like Coda is of precisely opposite character, so that the general melodic feature is not much disturbed.

146. There are the usual upliftings of melody; of which a good example is that presented at bars 122-3, where the triad of G sharp minor is transformed into that of A minor for the sake of a more earnest cadence in the latter key. This is further exemplified in the most valuable manner later on (at bar 154); where the composer, not content even with this degree of earnestness, and wishing to increase it, has actually interspersed an extra bar; with the result that two bars follow one another, each raising the pitch of the melody by a semitone; and that the phrase accordingly cadences at a *tone* higher than the normal.

147. *Harmony*.—The principal attraction of the movement under this heading occurs during the treatment of the second subject; though, in this portion, the constituents of melody and rhythm contribute so much to the charm that the exact value of the harmonies, considered separately, is not so easily

decided; the more so as they are extremely simple, and seem, in themselves, to contain no promise of special effect.

148. A severe tonal progression occurs at the change of key, bar 90; where the harmonies of G, F, E, D minor and C (each prevailing for two bars) appear in succession. Besides this there would appear to be an intentional crudity of harmonic feature in the whole treatment of the first subject which accords well with its character.

149. *Rhythm*.—The broader features under this heading are normal; but there are numerous modifications. Take, for example, bars 9-10, 39-40, 106-7 and 200-1, each of which is practically a bar of common-time, although written in  $\frac{9}{8}$ . Another example of this feature is presented by the union of  $\frac{9}{8}$  and  $\frac{6}{8}$  subjects in the same phrase, at bars 176 to 180; besides which, four more instances of the same immediately follow. Still more valuable to the student is the absolute indifference to the position of the bar-line displayed during the treatment of the second subject—from bar 45 to 90 inclusive—and the consequent opportunity thus afforded him of training himself to regard the bar-line independently of the rhythm: all conventions notwithstanding.

150. *Figuration*.—Not so much as a single semiquaver occurs throughout the movement: this fact alone will be a guide to the sparseness of figuration. All that occurs under this heading is occasional triplet distribution of triad harmonies; with which exception every note of the movement is integral to its sense.

151. *Form*.—There is an approximation to Rondo treatment; the first subject alternating with each of the others in succession. But there is nothing in the way of logical evolution; nor is there any graduation of the change from theme to theme, the various melodies being allowed to follow one another without the least ceremony.

152. *General characteristics*.—The movement is one of great vigour, and fully instinct with the true Northern spirit. In freedom of rhythm it is positively wanton, and the manliness and Volkslied character of its sentences are traceable to this cause in no small degree.

153. It may perhaps be said that the comparative absence of figuration and the sternly integral nature of all contents tends to heaviness. The degree to which this amounts to a reproach will however depend upon the player's technique.

## NOTES.

154. Independently of musical merit this work is of special interest as having been the means of enlisting the warm support of Schumann on the composer's behalf. The visit of Brahms as a young man of twenty to the great composer at his house in Düsseldorf; the enthusiasm displayed by Schumann at the sight of musical creations of entirely new character; the generosity of his appreciation, as evidenced by his now celebrated essay—the one which appeared in the “*Neue Zeitschrift*”; all these are matters which at the present time may be said to have acquired historical importance.

155. When Brahms, however, emboldened by such powerful support, presented himself shortly afterwards at Leipzig, the result, both of the performance and publication of his compositions, was very far from being a general verdict in his favour; many being then (as some are still) of opinion that Schumann, with his usual warmth of heart, had gone too far in the mere desire to encourage a young talent.

156. It may be readily conceded that Schumann was in such matters commonly actuated by an excessive benevolence; but the fact of his views having already received such ample confirmation in the case of Chopin was sufficient cause for hesitation in condemning the new comer. In addition to that, the style of Brahms was more calculated to provoke differences of opinion than was that of Chopin, even at the latter's period of greatest novelty. For, in the case of Chopin, it was only the performer who required a new equipment, the works being of easy comprehension and requiring only a good interpretation to be admitted into favour. But, in the case of Brahms, not only the performer, but also the *listener*, required to be specially equipped; and this in the very nature of things constituted a hindrance of far more serious character than as it does now.

157. The letters of Schumann at this period contained many touching allusions to the young composer; some of which are here quoted.

To Dr. Härtel.

Düsseldorf, Oct. 8, 1853.

“We are now living in a very musical age. A young man

has appeared here who has impressed us most deeply with his wonderful music, and who will I am quite convinced make the greatest sensation. I will shortly send you more particulars."

To J. Joachim.

Düsseldorf, Oct. 8, 1853.

. . . . "I think, if I were younger, I might make a few polymeters on the young eagle who has flown across from the Alps to Düsseldorf so unexpectedly. . . . I think Johannes is the true apostle who will write revelations which many Pharisees will be unable to explain, even after centuries."

To Strackerjan.

Düsseldorf, Oct. 28, 1853.

. . . . "There is a young man from Hamburg here of so much power and genius that to my mind he far outshines all the younger composers. Some of his wonderful works, songs especially, will soon penetrate to you."

158. In a further letter to Joachim Schumann mentions the following works of Brahms as having been submitted to Härtel.

Op. 1, Quartet. Op. 2, Six Songs. Op. 3, Scherzo.

Op. 4, Six Songs. Op. 5, Sonata in C,

from which we perceive that the opus-numbers were afterwards readjusted. He goes on to say that for these works Brahms is to receive forty Friedrichs d'or; adding—

"This seems to me a very fair beginning; for as a rule publishers prefer to give nothing at all for quartets and even require a fee from the composer for their expenses."

159. It now only remains to present the reader with the text of the article, entitled "Neue Bahnen," which Schumann wrote for the "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik" of Oct. 28, 1853.

## NEW PATHS.

Years have elapsed—nearly as many as I devoted to the earlier editing of this paper, namely, ten—without my having once been heard on this ground, so rich in reminiscences. Frequently, though I was actively and laboriously engaged in the

task of production, I felt a wish to speak; many new and talented men had appeared; a new strength seemed to be manifested in music, as is proved by numerous high-soaring artists very recently, though their productions are known perhaps only to a somewhat narrow circle. I here allude to Joseph Joachim, Ernst Naumann, Ludwig Normann, Waldemar Bargiel, Theodor Kirchner, Julius Schäffer and Albert Dietrich, together with C. F. Wilsing, the profound composer who has devoted himself to sacred music, and whom I must not forget. Niels W. Gade, C. F. Mangold, Robert Franz and Stephen Heller, also, must be mentioned as their valiantly advancing precursors. Following with the greatest interest the paths pursued by these elected ones, I thought that after such a state of things there would and must suddenly appear one destined to give expression in an ideal manner to the deepest feelings of the age; one who would present us with the qualities of a master, not developed gradually, but, like Minerva, springing completely armed from the head of Jupiter. He has now come: a youth, at whose cradle graces and heroes kept guard. His name is Johannes Brahms; he came from Hamburg, where he created in still darkness, after being educated, by an admirable and enthusiastic teacher, in the most difficult laws of his art. He had, too, been recommended to me a short time previously by an honoured and well-known master. Even in his outward appearance he showed all those signs which announced to us:—this is one of the elect. Sitting at the piano, he began to disclose wonderful regions. We were attracted within circles more and more magical. To this must be added a genial power of execution, changing the piano into an orchestra of sorrowfully sounding and loudly jubilant voices. There were sonatas, or rather veiled symphonies—songs, the poetry of which would be understood without words, though a deep and songful melody pervades them all—detached pianoforte pieces, partly of a demoniacal nature, most graceful in their form, then sonatas for violin and pianoforte, quartets for stringed instruments—and all so different from one another that each one appeared to flow from a separate source. Then again he seemed, like some onward foaming flood, to unite them all as in a waterfall, bearing on the surface of its waves, as they dashed down below, the peaceful rainbow, and surrounded on the bank by butterflies and nightingales' voices. When he sinks his magic wand to where the powers of the masses in the

orchestra and chorus lend him their strength, we shall find still more wonderful glances into the secret of the spirit-world in store for us. May the highest genius strengthen him, as there is a prospect that it will, since there dwells within him another kind of genius, that, namely, of modesty. His associates greet him on his first passage through the world, where, perhaps, wounds, but also laurels and palms, await him; we welcome him as a strong champion. At every period there exists a secret league of kindred spirits. Link yourselves together in a closer circle, ye that belong to each other, so that the truth of art may shine more and more brightly, spreading everywhere joy and blessings."

\*\* This sonata has been arranged for piano duet by Paul Klengel.

OP. 2, NO. 2. SONATA IN F SHARP MINOR.  
(For Pianoforte Solo.)

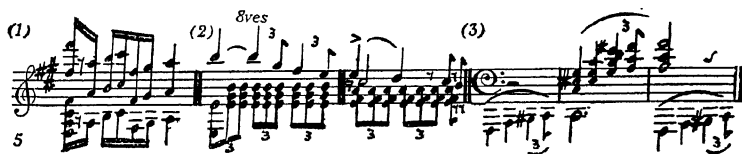
Dedicated to Madame Clara Schumann.

ALLEGRO: ANDANTE: SCHERZO: FINALE.

I. ALLEGRO.

160. *Key, time and extent.*—In F sharp minor; Allegro non troppo ma energico (più mosso at Coda), time  $\frac{3}{4}$  (a virtual  $\frac{9}{8}$  for greater part of the movement); 198 bars, being 82 for first section (which is not repeated), 40 for Development, and 76 for Repetition and Coda.

161. *Thematic material.*—First subject in F sharp minor, of declamatory and agitato character. Second subject (introduced in C sharp minor though really in E and of  $\frac{9}{8}$  effect), a Cantabile of highly passionate and dramatic expression. With each of these subjects a third subject is interwoven as described later.



162. *Melody.*—The first subject is essentially rhythmical, and its disjointed phrases, based upon leading harmonies of the key, therefore practically deprive it of the usual melodic characteristics; all that remains of that nature being in tumultuous assertion of the tonality. The second subject is on the other hand so redolent of pure melodic charm that the contrast

between the two is of the most powerful description, and would probably appear incongruous but for the fervour which seems to render the second subject in some sense the outcome of the first. This alone, however, would have been scarcely sufficient to reconcile them without the invention of the melody here described as third subject, which really intervenes, and is therefore "third" subject not in order of succession but in view of its subsidiary character. In its first form, as introduced at bar 16, its expression is placid and meditative; but, being based upon the mere notes of the triad, it becomes pliable in the hands of the composer to such an extent that the whole movement is besprinkled with it. The placid character therefore only applies to its original statement as it is used in various manners of time distribution.

163. *Harmony*.—The harmony of the first subject is merely elementary; but it affords a pointed example of what Fuller-Maitland calls Brahms' "fondness for themes built on the successive notes of the tonic chord"; the commencing chords of the first three bars being those of F sharp, A and C sharp respectively. The harmonies of the second subject (the actual commencement of which is here fixed at bar 51) are, on the contrary, of extreme richness and diversity. Yet, prime chords are not so much the cause of this as resultant combinations; attributable to melodic inflections, the course of modulation, the successive grades of rising sequence and the helpful figuration. To analyse the governing harmonies would reveal but little:—the entire character of the subject depending upon the resultant combinations alluded to.

164. The student will do well to accept the harmonies of this portion of the movement as illustrating the fact that:—Richness of combination does not depend upon the use of ingenious or abstruse progressions; for, when the ground plan is simple, the composer can afford to treat his chords with a freedom impossible to be ventured upon under other conditions.

165. *Rhythm*.—The quasi-recitative first subject renders it somewhat immune from ordinary rhythmical conditions as regards the phrase. The bar-subdivision, however, again illustrates Brahms' freedom from the conventional sense of measure whenever it suited his purpose to dispense with it. This faculty is one so useful in rhythmical expression which aspires to any degree of refinement that it is surprising to see so little



advantage taken of it by composers generally. Examples are frequent, but only one occurs in the first subject where, at bar 14, two detached chords divide the  $\frac{3}{4}$  time bar *equally*; thus producing an ideal "pesante" effect in approaching the pause on the dominant, which follows.

166. The evolution of second subject begins at bar 40, from which point to bar 50 the rhythmical phrases are of an ostensible three-bar length. They offer to the student, on that account, a valuable object-lesson illustrating that—

The rhythmical force and value of the association of a given number of bars differs with the subdivisions to which the latter are subject.

167. The illustration in this case is that of the difference between 3 and  $2 + 1$ ; aggregations which it is only too natural to confound.

168. In order to prove this the student may observe that, had the phrases been really of three-bar length, an extra bar after No. 50 could not have been avoided. As, however, they are of two-bar length (with mere interspersions of a bar of light rhythmical force making them up to three in appearance) or—to put it much more shortly—as they are *not 3 but  $2 + 1$* , the additional bar was not only unnecessary, but its absence rendered the bold entry of the second subject at bar 51 all the more impressive.

169. These divergencies in composition of the phrase receive another curious illustration somewhat later; for, at bar 56, the extra-bar is, as it were, dropped right into the middle of the three-bar phrase; and again this form of irregularity is made to serve the purpose of increasing the effect of a new departure—the latter being, on this occasion, the "*più agitato*" of bar 58.

170. This variation of the greater rhythmic pulsations is further exemplified as from bar 64, which, with the three following bars, is devoted to rising sequence in single-bar phrases; but when, at bar 70, the concluding bass-figure is repeated for intensity, the bar-line is crossed without the slightest compunction; so that bars 70 and 71 might, in the estimation of some, have been written with greater correctness as three bars of  $\frac{3}{4}$ .

171. We see, therefore, that continually increasing fervour leads Brahms to have recourse to diminution; in which respect he is quite at one with other composers. But the diminution

which he most affects is of the *rhythm*; and as the essential condition of both diminutions and extensions is that they shall be gradual, it is easy to see that a composer whose manner it is to apply this to the rhythmical element must necessarily be led to very frequent changes in the bar-value. To reproach Brahms with a fondness for such is the more absurd as he often avoids them where they might feasibly have been employed; and the bars (70-1) just remarked upon are a case in point. The reproach has, in fact, as little foundation as that implied in the nickname "Syncopen-Komponist" (syncopation-composer) respecting which we shall have something to say in connection with other works.

172. *Figuration*.—With the exception of occasional tremolo dispersions and chord repetitions the only feature occurring under this heading is the tenor figure already mentioned as contributive to the richness of harmony (q.v.); though for the sake of completeness the figuration of the dominant chord occupying bars 119-122 and immediately preceding the return must also be included.

173. *Form*.—The movement has an important bearing upon this question, for it exemplifies Brahms in a character somewhat peculiar to him of uniting a strict observance of broad conditions with the exercise of freedom in the modification of detail.

174. In this case—

An accentuated contrast between first and second subjects rendered some intermediate treatment necessary, and occasion was taken to introduce a special subject for that purpose:—

which was bound to form a novel and interesting feature even if other interests had not grouped themselves around it.

175. But in addition to serving the purpose above indicated this intermediary trait was converted into a special means of giving unity to the whole movement. This happened in various ways, the two principal of which may be profitably mentioned.

176. Firstly, this intermediate subject is destined to be used in diminution for the purpose of introducing the second, which thereby naturally acquires the character of having been logically evolved.

177. Secondly, it is made to do duty as a counterpoint, in turn to each of the other two subjects.

178. That which seemed, therefore, at first sight, to be an undue violence of contrast, has been converted, by skill of the composer, into the precise contrary; or, in other words, into a delicate graduation from theme to theme. This means no less than that we have here before us a special treatment of the sonata-form consisting of—

The intervention of a new subject for the purpose of uniting two which might otherwise appear incongruous; and which, by serving also as a counterpoint to each of the other subjects in turn, contributes to the unity of the whole.

179. It must be regretfully admitted, however, that there is another side to the picture; for the shortness of the Development (40 bars) especially after the copious treatment of second subject in first section, can scarcely be viewed as adequate. Nor is the management of the Return to be considered as good—or even nearly as good—as that of the first sonata. Moreover the presence of the insipid bars 89 to 91 is extremely difficult to account for; and, finally, the Coda adds nothing but length to the movement. Such features as these lend probability to the view that this was not really the second sonata; but that, as a matter of fact, it was the first written.

180. *General characteristics.*—A leading feature is the extreme prominence given to the passionate second subject, whereby the sonata-form is converted into a receptacle for whatever amount of spontaneity and rhapsody the composer may think fit. It shows us the reason for a dislike of Brahms on the part of apostles of the cult which maintains that sonata-form is exploded, and that it becomes musicians of that superior devotion to the expression of pure human feeling which it is now the fashion to profess to reject it as stale and antiquated. They cannot be reasonably expected to disclose where the shoe really pinches; and that only in *their* hands the form is antiquated, because their capacity extends simply to the mechanical, and not to the masterly treatment of it. Naturally, a composer whose works so powerfully exemplify the contrary of their tenets is unwelcome to them; but, in the hope that some may be willing to reconsider the matter, the following uses of

the intermediary subject are here gathered into a list; as so much bread to be cast upon the waters:—

At bar 16:—introduced in placid form.

At bar 23:—combined with first subject.

At bar 40:—serving in diminution to prepare the logical evolution of second subject.

At bar 92:—again in diminution as counterpoint to second subject.

At bar 162:—restoration to its original time-value to serve as bass of second subject.

181. All this happens quite independently of the free use of second subject; which accordingly soars to any height of rhapsodical expression without the slightest fear of incoherence; and, therefore, with a continual significance to which pure rhapsody can never attain.

## II. ANDANTE.

182. *Key, time and extent.*—In B minor (finishing major, and concluding on the dominant in preparation for the Scherzo “attaca”); Andante con espressione (with a “grandioso” terminating in “largo” to introduce the major section); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$  (occasional  $\frac{3}{8}$ ); 87 bars, being 67 for minor and 20 for major section.

183. *Thematic material.*—A simple theme of Volkslied origin; see “Notes.”



184. *Melody.*—The presence of the intervals diminished fourth and augmented second in the first period as well as that of the modulation in the second suggests that the inspiration, supposed to have been drawn from Volkslied, reposes upon the words, and not upon the melody, of the latter. Moreover, the artistic object displayed by the dominant cadence, whereby

continuity is imparted to the settings, and whereby also the way is paved for uniting this movement "attaca" with the following, points also to the fact that we have here to deal with an original melody. This melody forms also that of the opening of the next movement which is, accordingly, in some sense, of the nature of a variation of it.

185. *Harmony*.—As the prevailing richness of harmony is traceable to the same causes as during the first movement, the reader is referred to the account of it there given. A special feature in this case, however, is that, as the movement proceeds, the harmonies grow so gradually in fervour that the whole progress may be regarded as one of increasing intensity in this respect. To this intensity the melodic phrases, in imitation, and in fully harmonised form for either hand, greatly contribute; in which connection it may be mentioned that the multiplicity of notes necessitates some use of three staves in notation.

186. *Rhythm*.—This is duple, and of the simplest; the only departure from a purely elementary character occurring as the result of phrase-extension at conclusion of the minor section, and leading to the transient use of  $\frac{3}{8}$  and "largo," just before resumption of the "tempo primo" in major mode.

187. *Figuration*.—The place usually occupied by figuration is almost completely taken up by contrapuntal feature. This is well for two reasons; for, not only is contrapuntal feature of greater interest and value, but it must be confessed that, in the use of conventional forms of figuration, Brahms is not particularly happy.

188. The second setting, for example (bar 18) is figured with detached semiquavers which alternate with the notes of the theme. But they have such an obvious appearance of being there merely for the sake of a semiquaver motion that the effect is merely mechanical—and even awkward at that. The only other instance occurs in the bass of bars 80, 82 and 84, being in demisemiquaver arpeggios for an equally obvious purpose.

189. *Form*.—The melody is in two periods, one of 8 and one of 10 bars. Of this there are two quasi-variation settings in the minor concluding with phrase extensions in introduction of a major section. The latter consists of one setting of great elaboration and terminates on the dominant in accordance with the theme; this feature being utilised to effect a join to the next movement.

190. *General characteristics*.—These are a continually increasing interest; the preservation of perfect continuity notwithstanding the variation form; and a highly dramatic use of what, for want of a better term, may be called “compound imitation”; by which is meant completely harmonised phrases used in imitation. The result of the foregoing combination of traits is that the orchestral character of the movement (and especially towards its conclusion) runs particularly high.

### III. SCHERZO.

191. *Key, time and extent*.—In B minor (changing to D for the “trio”); Allegro (changing to “poco più moderato” for the “trio”; also for the “codetta”); time,  $\frac{6}{8}$ ; 111 bars, being 21 for first section, 51 for “trio” (inclusive of one extra for “2da Volta”), and 39 for Return and “Codetta.”

192. *Thematic material*.—The subject of the first section is the succession

B, C sharp, D, A sharp,

derived from the theme of the slow movement; that of the Trio being a Cantabile of hunting character.



193. *Melody*.—The hunting character is not confined to the Trio; horn phrases being also employed to complete each period of the first section. The difference is that, in the latter instance, they are merely typical horn passages; whereas, in the trio, they assume a melodic form of high poetic character. But in estimating this we have to reckon with Brahms' peculiar trait of employing melody, harmony and rhythm as interdependent; for it is not always easy to decide how much of the effect is attributable to either source. Thus it is evident that, in the present case, the charm cannot consist in melody alone, or even principally, notwithstanding the inherent power of melody principally to arrest our attention; because the whole

melodic material consists of a single three-bar phrase, which obviously could not, without assistance, be productive of such a sustained interest.

194. *Harmony*.—In the first section the change of key at the horn-passages is simply interesting: the harmonic attraction centring in the Trio, where the three-bar phrase is made to modulate by flattening the third in the dominant chord with which it ends, and thus converting the chord into the triad of a new key. When we have arrived at the double-bar we find this process reversed; the tonic being now sharpened to become the third of a new triad, with the result that, in modulating, the melody now rises; instead of falling as it had done previously. There are those who condemn Brahms for the use of such methods, and who claim the fact as proving that he possessed no true inspiration. Apart from the circumstance that inspiration is merely a guide to the æsthetic application of means, we have to remember that Bach falls under the same ban; for it was from him that Brahms derived his predilection for such treatments, and his affectionate veneration of that great master is well known.

195. *Rhythm*.—The one point of interest is the three-bar phrase of the trio and its extensions.

196. *Figuration*.—The continuous shake during the Return commencing from bar 82 may possibly be so considered; but, if so, that is all.

197. *Form*.—The first section consists of two eight-bar periods, the latter of which is extended. The Trio is of three periods, the first and third of which consist of four, and the second of three three-bar phrases. The occasional extensions amount in all to 8 bars. There is, then, an intermezzo of 9 bars, followed by the Return. In the latter, the repeat of the first period is in paraphrase, instead of being indicated by double-bar. This treatment then continues to the Codetta; which is in one sentence of 8 bars, and is reminiscent of both sections.

198. *General characteristics*.—In this movement there is the same gradual accumulation of tone-volume as during the Andante. Thus, the Trio, contrary to custom, is allowed to become more heavily weighted with notes than the opening section, and the Return, being in paraphrase, continues the same development. The judgment of the latter feature may,

however, be questioned; and it is certain that the technical power called into requisition is not justified by the effect.

199. Players who may here find themselves overtaxed may be reminded that a Return effected by ordinary "da capo" will cause them to lose nothing of the real beauty of the movement.

#### IV. FINALE.

200. *Key, time and extent.*—In F sharp minor (the Introduction opens in A although the movement is in F sharp minor, with changes to G sharp minor and F minor in course of the development, and to C in course of the return; concluding in F sharp major); Sostenuito introduction, followed by Allegro non troppo e rubato (changing to "animato" for the Development and to Poco sostenuto to introduce the Return; the Coda being "Molto sostenuto"); time, common; 284 bars, being 25 for Introduction, 88 for first section, 94 for Development (inclusive of 3 for "2da Volta"), 64 for Return, and 13 for Coda.

201. *Thematic material.*—Both Introduction and Coda are in Fantasia; the opening only of the former having any reference to thematic contents.

202. The main subject is stated at bar 26, and is of serious import, seeming to betoken a full development. The second subject appears at bar 72, and is of lighter character, being composed of short disjointed phrases, with bass in continuous quaver motion.



203. *Melody.*—The approximation to church-character of the first subject is in fair contrast with the lightness of the second. A chromatic uplifting of the melody occurs at bars 82 and 240, and the first subject is used both in diminution and augmentation; the former being as "lead" of the



fugato at bar 62, and the latter as bass of the quasi-cadenza at bar 262.

204. *Harmony*.—The principal feature is that offered by the succession of semibreves commencing with bar 123 (at the beginning of the development) in which the melody, rising by semitones, gives occasion to an interesting progression leading to the change into G sharp minor.

205. *Rhythm*.—The duple rhythm of the movement presents no special interest apart from changes in the time-value of the pulsations; but these afford a lesson of singular value, as will now be shown.

206. The first subject is one with natural tendency to alla-breve treatment (minim pulsations); and, at its introduction (bar 26), Brahms has accordingly employed a moving tenor part in correction of this feature, as it was necessary to his design to keep alive the crotchet pulsation. Whenever, therefore, the crotchet pulsation was no longer desired, all he had to do was to omit the tenor-part; in which case the subject naturally reverted to its original condition, which is precisely what happens at the return to F sharp minor (bar 191). But, this principle once established, it is obvious that the means became thereby available for a gradual slackening of pulsation; the extent of which was only subject to what æsthetic considerations might dictate. Accordingly we find that he has taken advantage of it, as from bar 96, and from thence to end of the first section; this portion presenting minim pulsation from bar 96 to 104 and semibreve pulsations afterwards. After the repeat the same feature again occurs, leading to a long succession of semibreve pulsations in which the melody (q.v.) rises by semitones. This lasts for no less than 24 bars; ceasing only with the “*animato*” and change to G sharp minor, and producing a singularly massive effect. Whether such ponderous phrasing is suited to the instrument may be open to question; but, whatever may be the judgment in that respect, it cannot affect the usefulness of the point of instruction which is here exhibited, and which may be thus stated:—

A subject with tendency to minim pulsations may be made to pulsate in crotchets by means of a moving inner part, the removal of which induces an automatic slackening which is open to continuation.

207. It is of course open to the reproach that, in such cases, the slackening is much easier to effect than an artistic

regain of the original *tempo*; and it must be admitted that Brahms himself has not shown himself quite equal to the occasion, for the awkwardness of the animato entry at bar 147 is undoubtedly a blemish. That, however, is entirely the affair of the individual composer, and has nothing to do with the principle above stated.

208. *Figuration*.—This is unimportant; consisting of:—

- (a) The alternate quavers of the bass of opening subject (bars 26, 208, etc.).
- (b) The bass chords in accompaniment of same subject, at bar 156.
- (c) The special figure used in accompaniment of second subject at bars 72 and 229.
- (d) The figure derived from the fugato of bar 62 and noticeable as from bars 83 and 240.

209. *Form*.—The Introduction and Coda have no formal interest, being in free style and practically separated from the movement. These features apart, the form would be symmetrical but for two slight features. One is that non-recognition of the fugato in the return groups deprives the bass figure from bar 238 of full meaning; and the other is that the long succession of semibreves (from bar 123) induces a fantastic and illogical return to theme. The movement does not therefore represent Brahms favourably in respect of its form.

210. *General characteristics*.—The effect upon the whole is fantastic; and, when we consider that both introduction and conclusion are frankly so, it seems right to conclude that the extraordinary changes in time-value of the pulsation were intended to contribute to a like effect.

## NOTES.

211. Florence May tells us that this Sonata was written before Op. 1: viz., in November, 1852; and, from the observations taken in the foregoing account, this fact can scarcely excite surprise. It is moreover corroborated by Schumann's idea, as communicated to the publishers to the effect of the C major Sonata being really Op. 5. Huneker considers that in this Sonata "we emerge from the study chamber into more stirring life." He also alludes to it as "much more significant

than its predecessor"; whilst his appreciation of the second subject in the first movement is given in the following glowing terms:—

"If, after playing it, you find Brahms deficient in romantic warmth, then let us unclasp hands, and seek you some well-footed byway."

212. Dietrich tells us that the inspiration for the slow movement came from an old German song which ran:—

Mir ist leide  
Dass der Winter beide  
Wald und auch die Haide  
Hat gemacht Kahl,

or, in translation (original):—

'Tis sad to me  
The winter to see  
When forest and lea  
Become so bare.

213. Mme. Viard-Louis calls this movement a conversation "out in the woods"; and, in the Scherzo which follows, she imagines the hunt passing by "with its songs and its sounds." Everything, she adds, is there; "even to the baying of the hounds"—the last remark being no doubt in allusion to the progression

B, C sharp, D, A sharp,

upon which both Andante and Scherzo are founded.

214. It may be noted in conclusion that this composition is one of the very few containing a scale passage.

★★ This Sonata has been arranged for piano duet by Paul Klengel.

# OP. 4. SCHERZO IN E FLAT MINOR.

(For Pianoforte Solo.)

Dedicated to Ernst Ferdinand Wenzel.

ALLEGRO: TRIO I AND D.C.: TRIO II AND CODA.

215. *Key, time and extent.*—In E flat minor (changing to E flat major for Trio I and to B for Trio II); Allegro molto e con fuoco; “*rasch und feurig*” (changing to “*più mosso*” for Coda); time,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ; total bars in performance, 858 (inclusive of all repeats and of D.C. after Trio I); 627 integral bars; being 151 for first section, 149 for Trio I, 162 for Trio II, 141 for Return, and 24 for Coda.

216. *Thematic material.*—There are two subjects for each section; and consequently six, in all. The first is of energetic and agitated character; not humorous, but full of sprightly animation. All the other subjects may be braced as representing various kinds and degrees of cantabile effect.

**1st section**

(a) 

(b) 

**Trio I**

(a) 

(b) 

**Trio II**

(a) 

(b) 

9 

217. *Melody*.—The melodic feature is prominent; as may already be gathered from the variety of subjects. But, as if the melodic design of the piece had been intended to be one of continual subdivision, the subjects of the opening section and of Trio I are both twofold; in each case the later development forming the greater attraction; not only in respect of melody but also in respect of the characteristic which it is the special business of the sections respectively to display. Thus the bold after-part of the first subject (bar 18, also 103 and 108) and the soothing phrases of Trio I (bars 169, 181, 253, 265) each convey more—in the first case of boldness, and in the second of the gentleness desired for contrast—than their respective openings.

218. The second Trio is not treated in the same way for reasons which appertain to Form (q.v.).

219. *Harmony*.—To be essentially modern and chromatic can scarcely be regarded as a feature nowadays. We therefore pass on to refer to the interesting association of progressions old and new. The latter, of course, abound; but samples of the former are fairly frequent (bars 54 to 60, 162 to 168, 246 to 252, 257 to 264) and impart a special *cachet* to the piece. There is also interest for the student in the portion by which the second Trio is joined to the Return (say, from bar 380 to 460, finishing at the change of key) which well exemplifies this composer's restraint even though engaged in producing an effect of exuberance. The reference is specially to the course of the modulations which, though free, continually return to B; the key in which the Trio is cast. Thus, at bar 394, we are in G; but, by bar 405 we are back to the key of B again. At bar 425 we are in E flat; but, immediately afterwards, we are in B again. And although, in reaching the principal key (E flat minor) we have to pass through E minor, another mention of the key of the Trio has still to be made; a restlessness which might otherwise have proved to be excessive being thereby condoned.

220. *Rhythm*.—This is duple; practically throughout, and with a general prevalence of the four-bar phrase; an important exception to which will however be mentioned in a separate paragraph. For a piece of such animated and impetuous character contractions and extensions of the phrase are extremely few; so few, in fact, as to constitute the extremely rare case of a Brahms piece with which we are inclined to find fault for an

undue simplicity of rhythm. Even such modifications of phrase as do occur are of the most elementary description; as, for example, at bar 190, where the previous four-bar phrase is divided into two of two bars; each of these being (at bar 198) divided into two of one bar each preparatory to return of the first theme.

221. Such changes as the above are as nothing however compared with the exception to duple rhythm to which we have referred, and which is to be found during the second portion of Trio I commencing with bar 212. This point is all the more deserving of notice as the piece is usually played without a proper appreciation of the subdivision of the sentence into component phrases. This is perhaps not surprising; for it must be confessed that the subdivision (commencing with bar 212) is singularly erratic, as the following exposition will show.

222. The phrases, expressed in bars from 212, are—

3, 3, 3, 3, 2, 2 || 3, 2, 3, 3, 2 ||

or, in all, 29 bars; as from 212 to 240 both inclusive. Each of the figures underlined above represents a phrase which Brahms has directed to be played "sostenuto"; besides which there is sufficient evidence, not only in the melodic inflections but also in the bass progressions, to show that the above distribution is in accordance with the composer's intention; and this seems to have been deliberately to disturb the rhythm for the purpose of giving point to the re-entry of the Trio's principal subject at bar 241. A sympathetic rendering in accordance with the above renders this portion of the work (which has generally a nebulous effect) both clear and beautiful.

223. Full technical instruction hereupon lying outside our present scope the reader may be usefully referred, for an interesting exposition of the subject to Dr. Prout's treatise on "Musical Form" (Chapter II, § 39).

224. *Figuration*.—For once Brahms has presented us with a copious example of conventional style in the bass of Trio II (bars 318-379 or 18-79 of the Trio) where for some 45 bars we have a waving arpeggio accompaniment precisely in the same style as that of the Cantabile in Chopin's Scherzo, Op. 31, and filling the situation extremely well. Another figuration is that of the second subject of first section, shown in the treble at (b) in Ex. 9. This figure is not only happily employed but

logically deduced; for, before its appearance as figuration, it had already been used twice as integral material: once at bars 24 to 32, and again at bars 34 to 43. It is therefore more genuinely in the Brahms manner than the foregoing.

225. *Form*.—Extreme symmetry in form usually means a lack of special interest; and, in this case, the sectional divisions having been given in the opening paragraph, it only remains to show how these are further subdivided.

#### OPENING SECTION. (Key, E flat minor.)

Statement of leading theme	...	...	...	45
Statement of second subject	...	...	...	36
Return to leading theme (with cadence in original key)	...			70
				<hr/> 151

#### FIRST TRIO. (Key, E flat major.)

Statement of first theme. (Note.—This extends to two bars beyond the indicated double-bar)	...	...	60
Statement of second theme (with the irregular rhythm as described in the text)	...	...	29
Return to first theme (with cadence on dominant serving for Da Capo)	...	...	60
			<hr/> 149

#### SECOND TRIO. (Key, B.)

Statement of first theme	...	...	17
Statement of second subject (cadencing in tonic)	...		62
In lieu of return, a transitionary section with combination of subjects leading to the main Return	...	...	83
			<hr/> 162
			462
Add 141 for main Return and 24 for Coda	...	...	165

and we have the 627  
indicated under "Key, time and extent."

226. *General characteristics*.—The term Scherzo is justified by the verve displayed, by the animation which prevails and by certain spasmodic effects with a disposition to approach

the humorous. But of humour there is none; the whole conception being one of too serious import to admit it. From the pianistic point of view the piece is one inclined to heaviness unless perfectly played, from which the reader may conclude that it offers fine opportunity for technical improvement; though not so much for rapidity of finger as for precision of attack and for crispness of touch.

227. Under perfect conditions the effect is magnificent; which justifies the surprise at the strange neglect of a piece so suitable for public performance thus expressed by Huneker:—

“The decadence of the piano recital—and who can deny that it is not in decay?—is to be ascribed to the fact that the scheme of the programmes is so lugubriously monotonous; and why such a piano piece as Brahms’ Op. 4 does not often figure is only to be explained by the hide-bound timid conservatism of the average concert pianist.”

## NOTES.

228. The work is one of those which Brahms played to Schumann on the occasion of the historical visit to Düsseldorf in 1853, and is described as “great” in Schumann’s letter to Breitkopf and Härtel, of November 3, 1853, wherein that generous protector of youthful talent asks for eight louis-d’or for it on the young composer’s behalf.

229. Schumann’s favourable opinion of the piece was thoroughly shared by Liszt, to whom Brahms had also been introduced by Joachim; the king of pianists so far interesting himself as to induce Brahms to perform the work publicly. This somewhat conduced to a premature and ill-considered estimate of the position which Brahms was destined to occupy; the inclination being to regard him as a recruit to the revolutionary or romantic party. The romantic element in Brahms had however no predominance; but, inaccuracy of judgment at that time is all the easier to understand when we remember that, even now, this composer is difficult to classify; on account of his work presenting us with the “heroic,” without that rigidity so usual in its association; with the “romantic,” free of the erratic rhapsody and general formlessness sometimes held out to our admiration as a virtue—with the “graceful,” without the



effeminacy and mawkish sentimentality which springs from the use of mannerisms; and finally with the learned, in all its nobleness and without a trace of mere pedantic display.

230. Let the player note finally that the success of the present piece largely depended upon the composer's performance of it. Execution alone will not suffice: there must be an intellectual mastery, and Schumann probably had something of this intellectual interpretation in mind when (November 9, 1853) he wrote to the publishers saying (*inter alia*):—

"His music ought really to be played *by himself*. I never remember to have heard such extraordinary effects before."

★★ This Scherzo has been arranged for piano duet by Friedrich Hermann.

## OP. 5, NO. 3. SONATA IN F MINOR.

(*For Pianoforte Solo.*)

Dedicated to the Countess Ida von Hohenthal.

ALLEGRO MAESTOSO : ANDANTE ESPRESSIVO : SCHERZO (ALLEGRO ENER-  
GICO) : RÜCKBLICK (ANDANTE MOLTO) : FINALE (ALLEGRO MODERATO MA  
RUBATO).

### I. ALLEGRO.

231. *Key, time and extent.*—In F minor (changing to C sharp minor and D flat; and finishing in F major); Allegro maestoso (changing to Maestoso and concluding Più animato); time,  $\frac{3}{4}$  (slight common and  $\frac{5}{4}$ ); 223 bars (being 72 for first section including 1 for 2da Volta; 66 for Development (commencing in C sharp minor and modulating through D flat and G flat to the return), and 85 for Repetition groups and Coda.

232. *Thematic material.*—First subject is of dual character; and consists, firstly, of six prelude bars followed by a grave cantabile of funereal import, upon completion of the latter, which is in C minor, the prelude portion again occurs, followed by the cantabile in plainer form and more resembling a church melody.

Second subject in A flat, of sustained character in the upper parts; with bass accompaniment of dispersed chord-sections in quaver motion.

Third subject in D flat, of rubato nature, commencing "accelerando" and subject to occasional "ritenuto." Otherwise, similar in style to the second subject, and treated with the same form of accompaniment.

233. The thematic material of this movement offers remarkably little contrast, and there is an evident intention to preserve one tenor throughout, the nearest approach to any relief to this being offered by the prelude portion of the first subject.



234. *Melody*.—The fact of the three subjects being almost of one character imparts to their sequence in course of the movement an effect approximating to that of one continuous melody. That of the prelude portion of first subject is somewhat disjointed, whilst the use of those of second and third subjects is limited to their merely formal appearances. The dominating melodic feature is therefore the second portion of first subject, in what may be described as its two versions of “funeral march” and “chorale”; to which must be added an exquisite ‘cello-like extension (occurring at the change to D flat during the development) which is of prayerful, meditative spirit, and, by its tenderness of expression, provides a contrast without any disturbance of the melodic flow.

235. As melodies cast in the ‘cello region are of more or less frequent occurrence this might not strike the student as presenting any specially Brahms-like feature; but it really belongs to the composer’s manner of accompanying his melodies with parts both above and below. Thus, at ten bars before the change of key (bar 79), the impressive G sharp monotone over the alto melody is a case in point, besides being a remarkably fine example for study.

236. *Harmony*.—Taken generally the harmonies of this movement are of church-like effect, but this arises more from an earnestness and gravity of intention than from any specially ecclesiastical character. The latter is present however in the “chorale” portion of the first subject; and it is the dominating vocation assigned to that melody which gives a church

character to the whole, notwithstanding the freedom and luxuriousness of some of the progressions.

237. The conception which led to a retention of the same melodic features has naturally caused also a prevalence of the same style of harmony. The greatest contrast is offered between the "chorale" phrases alluded to, which are very plainly harmonised; and the third subject, the accompanying chords of which are entirely chromatic.

238. Points worthy of the student's attention are:—

(a) Solemn effect of the double pedal at bar 7.

(b) Suspension occurring at the weak beat.

This apparent freedom is explained under the head of "Rhythm."

(c) Extreme prolongation of diminished seventh harmony (bars 73 to 75) while key of C sharp minor held in suspense.

(d) The "streak of sound" already mentioned (§ 128) and here again occurring at bars 7-10, 35-6, 37-8, 79-83, etc.

(e) The "uplifting" effect already described (§ 107-109) and here again occurring at bar 203; which, although apparently in D flat, is, in conception, an energetic expression of the same passage, in F.

(f) Sudden changes from major to minor, without regard to difference in position of the parts.

(g) The "sostenuto" progression commencing at bar 39, and again at bar 162.

239. *Rhythm*.—It is this feature of the movement by which its general appreciation is most obscured. The  $\frac{3}{4}$  time in which it is cast is merely to be accepted as more frequently in visible accordance with the rhythm than any other; but any player starting to treat the movement as consistently in  $\frac{3}{4}$  would simply present it in caricature. The plan recommended is to treat the bar-line as of no rhythmical value, but merely as an assistance to the eye in indicating the transpiring of a fixed number of beats; and to rhythmise the movement entirely in accordance with principles herein explained from time to time under the "Rhythm" heading of the various works. The subject is one which absolutely demands oral instruction coupled with practical illustration; but the following is an endeavour to overcome the disadvantages of a letterpress description.

240. Let us take first Spitta's observation that: "The extension and diminution of the melody, the lengthening of the strain by doubling the value of the notes, or shortening it by diminishing their value, which was such an important element of form in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries came to light again for the first time with all its innate musical vitality when Brahms took it up and even in his earliest works showed how thoroughly he understood it. The same is to be said of the method of inversion, the derivation of a new melody from the former by reversing the intervals, when the use of such 'artifices'—as they were called with an amazing misapprehension of the very essence of music—had from time to time been admitted, they had always been restricted to what was termed a 'Gelehrten Satz'; that is to say, they were worked out as school exercises and formed no part of the artist's living work. But with Brahms they pervade all his music, and find a place as much in the piano sonata and the simple ballad as in the grand choral pieces with orchestral accompaniments."

241. This will sufficiently show the necessity of treating the beats *neutrally*, in the first instance; and of depending, not upon the notation, but upon the sense, to indicate to us where the bar lines should fall. This operation is, in reality, quite easy; but it is rendered difficult by the player's habit, and by his constant association of the bar-line with a meaning not assigned to it either by Brahms or by the composers alluded to by Spitta in the above. To console him for any impediment he may experience it may be expedient to mention that constant use of the bar-line in the modern sense has created such an inveterate habit of the present-day musician that he is to a large extent *incapable* of scanning music in the neutral sense, and of depending upon its own mental signification to indicate where the rhythmical divisions should fall. Nothing could prove this more fully than the fact that when musicians now undertake to edit mediæval compositions for the use of present-day folk and have naturally to supply the bar-lines which the original composers did not want, they do not always, even after study, know where to put them.

242. Dr. Hugo Riemann makes very merry over a mistake of this kind into which poor Ambros fell. The latter was editing an old three-part chorus,

"Se vostre cœur,"

by Johann Okeghem\*; and, at the incidence of a passage similar (in respect of time-change) to several by Brahms in the movement now under review, instead of changing the time, as of course he ought to have done, and *would* have done had he gone only by the sense, he adhered to the conventional bar-value.

243. A good instance of the doubling to which Spitta refers may be found at bars 49-50 (also 172-3) where the two are really one bar of  $\frac{3}{2}$  and have simply the effect of a very deliberate and pronounced *rallentando*.

244. The student will find the dignity of the opening considerably increased if he will treat all beats as of equal rhythmical importance, and merely as successive steps ascending in force to the great chord at bar 5. The same thing occurs again at bar 17, and includes the suspension to which reference was made at (b) under the head of "Harmony."

245. The "*più animato*" which concludes the movement is peculiarly difficult to scan, and it must be admitted that Brahms has here used the bar-line rather inconsiderately. No verbal description could adequately convey how this portion is rendered; but the student may begin to construe it by considering its last four bars as *two* of  $\frac{3}{2}$ ; the previous bar being as an initial chord for the phrase; and the subsequent  $\frac{6}{4}$  merely amounting to an *accelerando*, with dignified reiterations to conclude.

246. *Figuration*.—Practically none. There is an occasional dispersion of two-note chord sections as accompaniment. There are also the syncopated chords of which free use is made for accompaniment purposes during the development, but nothing more.

247. *Form*.—From the higher standpoint the movement is in pure sonata form, but there are some features to which exception might be taken according to the light in which the matter is regarded. Brahms' fidelity to classical forms must be held to apply to their spirit only, and it has already been explained in the opening chapter how those who regard the question from the "set-rule" aspect have sometimes accused him of not understanding it. The truth is however that it was due to his mastery of it that he appeared always so free within its boundaries.

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\* The reference is to the fifth volume of Ambros' "*Musikgeschichte*," p. 16.

The *kind* of licence he takes, moreover, continually varies. In the last sonata, for example, there was such an accentuated contrast between the first and second subjects that the novel feature of an intermediate treatment was necessary to reconcile them. Here we have just the contrary, namely :

Such resemblance of character between the subjects of a sonata movement as to give to the whole an equable flow, comparatively eliminating the usual variations of emotional intensity.

248. This equable flow is still further contributed to by use of the first subject during the development; and it is obvious that in the case of a contrasted movement this would be better reserved for the return. The lack of contrast in the subjects has already been referred to under "Thematic Material" (q.v.).

249. *General characteristics.*—The impression produced is that of a religious procession. At times pompous and assertive; at others prayerful and plaintive, it entirely justifies the opinion expressed by Huneker (and which he says is shared by many other critics) that in this F minor Sonata "the most beautiful in the genius of Brahms has flowered." He calls the first movement "heaven-storming" in its occasional pompousness, and in allusion to the more placid portions says that they represent "the master at his best."

250. The effect however is by no means brilliant; and is entirely dependent upon making the meaning felt. Much technical capability is requisite upon the whole; though the passages presenting this need are somewhat isolated. They are to be found at the beginning and end of the development; say, bars 73-89 and 132-145. If the student will first make sure of these portions technically (and especially of the "twos-against-threes" for a single hand in bars 80-9) he need not fear any other impediment.

## II. ANDANTE.

251. *Key, time and extent.*—In A flat (changing to D flat, returning to A flat and concluding in D flat, the last portion being of the character of an intermezzo), andante espressivo (changing to "poco più lento," tempo primo, andante molto

espressivo and adagio), time  $\frac{2}{4}$  (changing to  $\frac{4}{6}$  with occasional  $\frac{3}{8}$ , returning to  $\frac{2}{4}$ , then passing to  $\frac{3}{4}$  and concluding in common time), 193 bars, being 38 for opening andante, 68 for poco più lento, 39 for return, and 48 for concluding section.

252. *Thematic material*.—The subjects are all original; but, in common with those of the other two sonata slow movements, have a poetic basis. The first is thought to be somewhat Mendelssohnian; the second is practically a duet between the two hands, distinctly interpretative of the mood indicated in the poem, whilst the third (that of the concluding section and also of duet effect) is of passionate cantabile expression.

253. The lines quoted by Brahms to head the movement are from Sternau; and are as follows:

Der Abend dämmert  
Das Mondlicht scheint  
Da sind zwei Herzen  
In Liebe vereint  
Und halten sich selig umfängen.

254. The following translation is offered merely for the purpose of enabling the general reader to perceive where the trochee and the dactyl fall, respectively, in the original; because, by that means, he will be able to perceive that (in this instance at all events) Brahms has had no intention of giving a setting of the words, or even of offering any suggestion to the same effect:

The eve is falling  
The moonbeams rise  
And light two lovers  
Who mingle their sighs  
And commune in fondness together.

255. We have therefore merely to deal with a movement in illustration of a given phase of sentiment, in which respect this is one of the very finest ever written. The three subjects are as shown in the example on the next page.

256. *Melody*.—The melodious character of the subjects is varied, but the duet effect aimed at throughout and in which the voices very frequently move in sixths preserves a feeling of unity which might otherwise appear to have been disturbed. It is in the second half of the first section that the duet is



formed of two independent (or rather interdependent) melodies, fragments of canon being put to the most effective use in expression of the poetic idea.



257. The second melody, considered in connection with the subject of the movement, is highly original. The voices, if so they may be called, uttering mere fragments of tune consisting of two semiquavers, and answering one another invariably at quaver distance, seem quite clearly to be associated with loving gesture, until the change to  $\frac{3}{8}$ ; when, all these fragments becoming united, there results a passionate melody at once presenting to our minds the picture of the lovers for very happiness suddenly bursting forth into song. There does not exist a finer sample of melodious expression of the kind in the whole realm of music.

258. The third melody has more the expression of steadfastness throughout, but it becomes quite impossible to mistake this intention when we arrive at the "molto pesante" (bar 166) where the lovers seem to call upon the very heavens to record their vow. After experiencing the emotion caused by this melody it seems, on returning to examine it, extraordinary to find it composed of so little.

259. *Harmony.*—The harmony is considerably influenced by copious use of the sixth; in respect of the employment of which interval this movement deserves to be quoted as an example not to be surpassed. This feature attracts the notice even of writers not specially engaged upon scientific aspects of the work. Thus Huneker has the following passage: "With anyone else but Brahms this well-used interval would be banal,

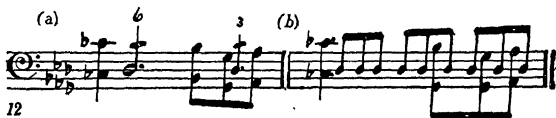
but he knows its possibilities and the entire section with the timid-sweet chords of the tenth evokes a mood seldom met with."

260. There are highly interesting modulations just before the  $\frac{3}{8}$  at each recurrence; and at bars 70 and 94, two instances of the somewhat rare feature of an elaborated organ point.

261. *Rhythm*.—The principal rhythmic feature in this movement is its exemplification of the *refrain*; which, although strictly a formal trait, reacts upon the rhythm by producing extensions of phrase.\* This occurs in several instances, as under:

At bars 9-11, 34-38, 115-117, 139-145, 150-152, 156-158, and finally at the grand refrain marked "*adagio*" and commencing at bar 181.

262. Otherwise, the rhythmic features are simply those usual to Brahms; but it should be mentioned that some of the adjustments of two notes against three are specially difficult of execution and a protest must here be entered against the manner, also, in which these passages are occasionally printed; whereby the difficulty of reading is very greatly increased. The following for example is the left hand part of bar 169; first, as often printed (a) and then as it ought to be (b):



263. An adroit instance of cadence extension whereby the change in *tempo* is insensibly effected recurs at bar 69, and again at bar 93; offering another proof of the composer's resource in making rhythm an active contributor to the fulfilment of his purposes. There is also a connection between this cadence extension and the refrain already mentioned, as it occupies the place of the latter in the "*poco più lento*" section.

264. *Figuration*.—This movement contains (for Brahms) a liberal amount of figuration; but as its employment is, as usual, for thoroughly subservient purposes, its form is of the simplest.

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\* The reader is referred to the author's booklet on "How to Compose within the Lyric Form" (Section 39, Example 28) for a detailed exposition of this interesting lyricism.

Dispersions and reiterations, with the object merely of increased motion, are plentiful throughout. The only approach to anything of the nature of a complex figuration occurs from the second bar of the  $\frac{3}{8}$  at each recurrence, where what is really an organ-point is elaborated into a gently murmuring *sostenuto*.

265. *Form*.—It will have been gathered from the preceding that this is essentially lyric, and the movement may be taken not only as an example of such form but also as representing the extreme development of which it is susceptible without encroachment upon its character. Not only is each “strophe” widely different in technical treatment; but even the refrain, which is their uniting feature, is presented in a continually varying manner. It need hardly be pointed out that the value of the piece to the student of composition becomes great in consequence of the same mood being preserved amidst so much variety in every other sense.

266. *General characteristics*.—From the total point of view we have here as near an approach to programme music as we shall ever find in Brahms, and one which enables us to perceive the degree of refinement which he would have contributed to that school had he chosen to devote any assiduity to its cultivation.

267. The player will find in this movement instances of the direct effect of touch graduations in great abundance throughout; but those exhibited by the “*poco più lento*,” in which the poetry consists in the left hand faithfully responding to the right, are exceptionally improving.

268. From the emotional standpoint the great climax at bar 166 is not only representative of the piano’s maximum power of such expression but also of the range possible to the lyric form; an equal extension of which it would be difficult to find even in the works of Brahms himself.

### III. SCHERZO.

269. *Key time and extent*.—In F minor (changing to D flat), *allegro energico*; time,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ; total bars in performance, 343 (inclusive of 28 for first section of trio repeated and 99 for D.C.), or, in notation 216 bars, being 100 for opening section and 116 for trio and subsequent passages to the return.

270. *Thematic material*.—The opening section, if one may judge by the disjointed character of its subject, was intended to be humorous, but in that case the idea has not been realised; an eccentricity of rhythm being the only result. The trio theme is of devotional trait and highly expressive generally; though more particularly exemplifying the alternate crescendo and diminuendo.



271. *Melody*.—The melodic feature of the first section is practically nil; though this should not be taken as implying any adverse judgment of the movement generally, in which, as one critic observes, "a certain grim diabolic humour is being hurled at you as if some being, ambuscaded in Parnassus, took pleasure in showering heavy masses of metal on your unprotected head." Any melodic shortcoming of the first section is however amply atoned for by the trio, the first section of which, though prayerful, seems rather the petition of a lover than of a penitent. Melodically the second part of the trio is somewhat spoiled by being mixed up with material from the first section, the two being so opposed that apparently not even the power of Brahms was sufficient to weld them successfully.

272. *Harmony*.—It seems scarcely open to dispute that the harmonies are too changeful for the character of the movement; and, *per contra*, that the latter's most successful portions are those which present the least modulation. In harmony, as in melody, this piece is of a very marked inequality; not, unfortunately, an inequality tending to variety, but to incongruity. Nothing could be more beautiful than the harmonies of the greater part of the trio; but the impression produced by them is sacrificed by the mode in which the return is effected. The mere progressions are of course interesting, as nothing less could be expected; but they lack the uniformity of appropriate-

ness which the master himself has so amply taught us to regard as a right.

273. *Rhythm*.—That of the first section is somewhat commonplace, being of the usual duple description, subject only to eccentricity of bar-subdivision; as already mentioned under "Thematic material." That of the trio, however, presents considerable vagueness after its opening eight-bar phrases; the difficulty being that the sentences lend themselves with an equally happy effect to various renderings, whilst the marks of expression are not a sufficient guide to the composer's intention. The first part, being phraseable in eights, some players may prefer this simple method; but its last sixteen bars are more artistically rendered in  $3 \times 4 + 4$ . In the second part the phrase is interrupted after five bars, this being followed by four and eleven; the latter being due to an extended half cadence. Soon after that, a disjointment of the phrase occurs, as the result of approaching the subject of the first section.

274. *Figuration*.—The only feature coming under this head occurs in the form of plain descending arpeggios of five notes; in accompaniment of the bass, during the over-modulating part of first section. (See "Harmony.")

275. *Form*.—The ordinary lyric form is disturbed by the extensions of the second part of the trio leading to the return. Otherwise, all is regular.

276. *General characteristics*.—It seems strange that this movement has not provoked more adverse criticism; for, in spite of the splendid vigour of the opening, and the exquisite phrases which begin the trio, its merit as a musical entity is open to much question, for the reasons already stated under various headings. The reader should know, however, that some critics take an opposite view; Huneker, for instance, proclaiming this to be "the greatest scherzo ever composed by Brahms." He adds that the *tempo* "suggests a valse—but an epical valse"; though in alluding to the *tempo* he has alighted upon that which most reveals a shortcoming, for it seems well nigh impossible to find out what the *tempo* should be. The indication, "*allegro energico*" is but partly indicative; and, to judge by the ornamental arpeggios prefixed to the bar entries of 1, 9, 78 and 80 (not to mention that of 70 which consistency would require) a somewhat deliberate speed must have been intended. But the phrasical beauty of the trio disappears under these conditions; yet there is no indication of any time-change. The

mere fact that, in six cases, a single note of the melody is of two-bar duration, and is plainly harmonised without the slightest addition, will be sufficient to show that the bar-duration is intended to be short. Under all the circumstances the best plan seems to be to take a quick *tempo* throughout.

#### IV. INTERMEZZO.

(Rückblick—Retrospect.)

277. *Key time and extent*.—In B flat minor; andante molto;  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 53 bars.

278. *Thematic material*.—This consists of fragments and reminiscences of:

- (a) First subject of the andante.
- (b) Opening of the scherzo-trio.
- (c) Closing phrase of allegro maestoso.
- (d) The “poco più lento” of the andante

woven together in a manner to recall these various features which have gone before. They are here exhibited and compared with the passages to which they relate.

The image displays a musical score for the Intermezzo, specifically focusing on thematic material fragments and their relation to other parts of the work. The score is written in B-flat minor, 2/4 time, and is marked Andante. The fragments are labeled (a) through (d):

- (a) Rückblick. Bar 1: This fragment is the first subject of the andante.
- (b) Bars 5-7: This fragment is the opening of the scherzo-trio.
- (c) Bars 12-13: This fragment is the closing phrase of the allegro maestoso.
- (d) Bars 20-21: This fragment is the "poco più lento" of the andante.

The score also includes a "Final cadence" and a section labeled "Trio of Scherzo" (bars 14-15). The tempo is marked "Andante (bar 56)" and "of Allegro".

279. *Melody*.—The melody is in this case all the more deserving of mention in consequence of being formed of phrases

which have already appeared; for, in spite of that fact, it has a perfectly spontaneous character, with no resemblance to any of the themes from which it is derived, but—on the contrary—a charming individuality of funeral march type.

280. *Harmony*.—No special feature here appears; with the exception of the enharmonic transformation of a chord of the ninth into augmented sixth, occurring at bar 24.

281. *Rhythm*.—The only suspension of the duple phrase is at bar 20 where the march-like movement is arrested in order to recall the “poco più lento” of the “andante,” the result being a quasi cadenza, after which the march is resumed.

282. *Figuration*.—This consists of the side-drum preliminary three short percussions before an emphasis, and is, of course, as old as the hills—although there are writers who seem to imagine it to be in some way the property of Mendelssohn on account of his having used it for the bass of No. 27 of the “Lieder ohne Worte.” It is, however, natural to recall Mendelssohn in this instance; because, independently of the bass figure, the theme itself is reminiscent of him—as was remarked of the first subject of the andante. The absurdity of attributing to Brahms a Mendelssohnian influence is great nevertheless, for at bar 26 and following the venerably antique figure alluded to is replaced by a pianistic modification of the same effect, which of course might have been used for the whole intermezzo, had the composer chosen.

283. *Form*.—This consists of a single sixteen-bar sentence repeated; being extended by “quasi cadenza” in the first instance and by codetta in the second.

284. *General characteristics*.—The characteristic here lies in the conception of a “*Rückblick*”—or intermezzo recalling—and so to speak gathering up—the impressions which have already transpired; before approaching the finale of a work in sonata-form. The idea is one of great poetic charm truly, but its merit does not end there; for it must be evident to the reader that the unity of the whole work is considerably enhanced by the fact of its introduction.

285. In point of artistic workmanship this fragment realises its intention completely; for as a *Rückblick* must necessarily be meditative, its musical embodiment should be pervaded by a perfect calm. That this is the case may be gathered from Huneker's remark that it sounds like “a far off echo, as if heard through sad falling waters.”

## V. FINALE.

286. *Key time and extent.*—In F minor (first changing to F major and returning, then changing to D flat and returning, afterwards finishing in F major); allegro moderato ma rubato (towards conclusion “più mosso,” “presto” and final grandioso of 17 bars, “tempo primo”; time,  $\frac{6}{8}$ ; 366 bars; being 39 in F minor, 39 in F major, 62 in F minor, 55 in D flat, 41 in F minor and 130 in F major.

287. *Thematic material.*—This movement is very rich in thematic material; as in addition to the three leading subjects, the episodial working by which the first of these is approached at each recurrence is more or less constant, though subject to great varieties of treatment.



288. The first subject is of capricious character and that it requires a free rendering appears to be admitted in the indications given.

289. The second subject seems designed to play the part of “Rückblick” to the solemn portion of first subject in the first movement. This is a proof of wonderful painstaking; and shows that Brahms set greater store by the unity of his work than is implied by any mere obedience to formal requirements.



290. The third subject is a sort of religious march and plays an important part in the movement, as it not only figures between the recurrences of the theme but is also used for the highly developed "più mosso" at the end.

291. *Melody*.—That of the first subject is fragmentary; consisting of mere snatches of tune, for which the time is frequently varied. According to its rendering, it is certainly more humorous than anything contained in the scherzo, and it becomes even more erratic by constant changes of pitch. So far as it may be regarded as a continuous melody, it is alternately lightsome and sentimental; the phrases of the first kind having a sprightly dancing rhythm and the others being in sostenuto.

292. The melody of the second subject is not only reminding of the chorale effects at beginning of the work, but even more particularly (as it proceeds), of the "duet" effects of the slow movement. Thus we have from bar 44, a series of passionate phrases in duet form which continue to bar 70 and quite clearly relate to the mood of the andante. A technical melodic trait is that these amorous passages contain scarcely anything but grade intervals, the exclamatory notes being worked with the octave.

293. The third of the principal melodies acquires a "canto fermo" character in consequence of its long series of equal notes. It requires very little shrewdness to foretell that such a theme is at present only in waiting for a contrapuntal treatment; but like all Brahms's work of this description it bears no trace of pedantry, but possesses much of the stateliness of the first movement and the same processional character.

294. *Harmony*.—This feature is too full of interest to admit of an exhaustive account; so in order to be concise the principal points are here indicated in a list:

At bar 20. Chromatic bass progression to harmonised phrases in sequence. (Again occurring at bar 121.)

At bar 44. Diatonic bass progression also to harmonised phrases in sequence.

At bar 62. The use of the sixth so remarkable a feature of the slow movement is here again in evidence, making it appear that the "Rückblick" idea was still in mind in writing this movement. The same interval

is used also for the descending melodic sequences at bars 26 and 127.

The episode, bars 79 to 100, attracts by an interesting organ point; associated at bar 91 with a descending chromatic progression of sustained notes at two-bar distance. (Note.—At bar 97 the sustained A flat required to complete the series is missing in the Sonata published; but was evidently intended by the composer.)

At bar 310 it may be questioned whether the over-modulative tendency remarked in the Scherzo is not again present; but as a mere question of harmony the page is full of interest.

295. To sum up:—the harmonies of this movement are, here and there, archaic; but elsewhere largely chromatic and ultra-modern. The medium is represented by the amatory duet phrases, which are simply effusive; as also by the many diatonic harmonies of quite ordinary character, but which have an added interest due to the use of fugato and canon.

296. *Rhythm*.—Notwithstanding the importance of this movement its rhythmical interest is not great—at all events in the sense of presenting exceptional features. It is, in fact, not only almost exclusively composed of the plainest two-bar phrases; but these are so pointedly marked off, in melody and phrasing, that this can scarcely have happened otherwise than as the result of set intention. All the rhythmic feature presented is of subordinate character, and already touched upon in connection with other works.

297. *Figuration*.—During the greater part of the movement no figuration occurs. Simple dispersion of harmony with reiteration is employed, but principally as accompaniment to the second subject; the only really important figuration being that of the polyphony commencing with bar 250 ("più mosso") which will be referred to under the head of "Form."

298. *Form*.—It is no small part of Brahms' merit to be able to handle existing forms in a new manner without infringement of their essentials. In this case his modification of the rondo is in the direction of establishing a perfectly even balance between subject and episode; in addition to which he

was so imbued with attachment to the sonata form that his treatment of the episodial matter, notwithstanding its variety, is tinged by that influence. Frequent reference has been made to the various means employed to give unity to the entire work, and it is to the like desire that, in this movement, a frequent use of the same subordinate material is to be attributed. The words of Sir Hubert Parry seem peculiarly apt in this connection:—"The principle of his art is to develop his works as complete organisms, and their artistic value depends upon the way in which they are carried out and the total impression they make rather than the attractiveness of the details. The features that are meant to stand out often have high beauty in themselves; but it is the relation in which they stand to the rest which gives them their full effect. Even the passages of lesser interest have their share in the total impression, and not the negative kind of function of similar portions in the early sonatas and symphonies.

"Brahms has carried this to the highest point, chiefly by reviving in his work more strongly than ever the principles of the great old contrapuntal school, and working into his instrumental forms the most musical qualities of the polyphonic method of Bach, of which he is a most powerful master.

"The manner and spirit are genuinely modern, but the matter is managed with the full powers which the earlier masters of the great choral age developed, as well as the powers of the later sonata writers; that is to say, the design is capable of being tested in all directions."

299. The student of composition will derive much benefit from a close examination of the manner in which the leading theme at each recurrence is approached; and from contrasting, with this object in view, the episodes commencing at bars 79 and 174 respectively. After that he should pass on to the polyphonic figuration which, commencing with a diminution of the third subject at bar 250 (*più mosso*), sustains a perpetual motion as accompaniment to the fugato, right on to the concluding phrases; and which, however difficult of execution, is, in point of design, simplicity itself.

300. *General characteristics*.—The whole movement has a decided "finale" character, the mood with which it commences clearly assuming something to have gone before; and it is no less than fascinating to study how and why this happens,

though the research is unavoidably associated with regret that such rare beauties should lie so deep, and therefore be only open to those who make their discovery a labour of love.

301. The peculiar atmosphere of this movement is due to the fact that it is a grand "Rückblick" of the whole Sonata, contrived with such art that the various reminders take us gradually back to the beginning of it. Thus the first subject is remindful of the Scherzo, and even includes a subtle allusion to the Trio of the latter. The second subject, partly in melody but still more by the adoption of archaic harmony, recalls the chorale portion of the opening; whilst the third subject, upon which so much counterpoint and canon is based, is nevertheless composed of material taken from the "poco più lento" and final section of the slow movement. These are only a few of the cases which might be mentioned, but they suffice to indicate a most important æsthetic principle; viz., that:—

Features of design, notwithstanding their concealment from ordinary observation, produce an emotional effect. The beauty contributed by them is therefore inherent to the works to which it applies and does not entirely rely upon intellectual appreciation in order to evoke a pleasurable sensation.

302. The following example contains one succinct illustration of each point mentioned above.

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The top system contains three excerpts: the first is labeled 'Finale' and 'Scherzo'; the second is labeled 'Trio' and 'Bars 6-7'; the third is labeled 'Andante (bars 92-3)' and 'Bars 153-6'. The bottom system contains two excerpts: the first is labeled 'Finale (bars 151-2)' and 'Andante 16 (bars 5-8 poco più lento)'; the second is labeled 'Finale (bars 40-3)' and 'Allegro (bars 146-9)'.

303. It may be hoped that these few short extracts will enable the reader to perceive how it is that we cannot tire of

music, which (in the words of Sir Hubert Parry quoted above) is so "capable of being tested in all directions." And to this may be added that, at every successive test, new beauties rise to our astonished sight.

\*\* This Sonata has been arranged for piano duet by Richard Kleinmichel.

# OP. 9. VARIATIONS ON A THEME BY ROBERT SCHUMANN.

(For *Pianoforte Solo*.)

Dedicated to Madame Clara Schumann.

THEME AND SIXTEEN VARIATIONS.

304. *Key, time and extent.*—The Theme and Variations 1 to 8, and 12 to 14 are in F sharp minor, Variation 9 is in B minor, Variation 10 in D, Variation 11 is in G (modulating to F sharp), and Variations 15 and 16 are in F sharp major; the former however being noted in G flat for convenience. The *tempi* are—Theme and Variations 1, 3 to 5, 8 to 10 and 12, 13 in  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; Variation 2 in  $\frac{3}{8}$ ; Variation 6 in  $\frac{6}{8}$ ; Variation 7 in common time; Variation 11 in  $\frac{4}{16}$ ; Variation 14 in  $\frac{3}{8}$ ; and Variations 15 and 16 in  $\frac{6}{4}$ . The indicated movements are Theme and Variations 1, 3, “un poco lento”; Variations 2, 4, “poco più moto”; Variation 5, “allegro capriccioso”; Variation 6, “allegro”; Variations 7, 8, 14, “andante”; Variation 9, “presto”; Variations 10, 15, 16, “poco adagio”; Variation 11, “un poco più animato” (after “poco adagio”); Variation 12, “allegretto poco scherzando”; Variation 13, “non troppo presto.” The extent of the Theme and Variations 1, 3, 13 is 24 bars; Variations 2, 7, 12 bars; Variation 4, 25 bars; Variation 5, 43 bars; Variations 6, 11, 27 bars; Variations 8, 15, 26 bars; Variation 9, 21 bars; Variation 10, 33 bars; Variation 12, 23 bars; and Variation 14, 34 bars.

305. *Thematic material.*—The theme is from Schumann’s “Bunte Blätter,” Op. 99, No. 4.



306. *Melody*.—The melody of the theme itself is used as bass for Variations 1, 3 and 8; whilst its original bass becomes the melody of Variation 10. The melody of the theme is also used as the bass of Variation 8; this variation being in canon, and the bass entering in elaborated form at the third bar. The melody of Variation 15 is also a very close approximation to that of the theme; and, therefore, these several variations (viz., Nos. 1, 3, 8, 10 and 15) do not enter into the category of those for which Brahms is celebrated, notwithstanding that some of them are of high merit in another way. In all the other cases the melodies are so wedded to design and elaboration that the headings “form” and “figuration” are more appropriate for references to them; and to these the reader is referred.

307. *Harmony*.—The harmony of the theme is taken bodily from Schumann; a circumstance not to be misconstrued, as the piece was intended as a compliment to the composer's friends. Students should take a special interest in Brahms' manner of using the melody as bass, especially during the second part of Variation 3; where the “depression of the voice” (q.v.) gives the harmony an abstruse appearance quite in excess of its real character. The progression of chords during the second part of Variation 6 is also noteworthy. Starting from C sharp we have the following chord-succession, as the ground of a profuse elaboration and splendid return to the variation opening:—



Variation 7 seems to be evolved from the suggestions contained in the chromatic modification of simple harmony, and is recommended as a sample of that kind of working when well under control.

Variation 8 is quite a marvel in its way, both of science and effect; though the latter can only be brought out by special methods. It may be doubted whether, in writing this melody, Schumann had had any idea of the lurking reply in canon two bars ahead of it; but there it stands—a proof that the possi-

bilities of a theme entirely depend upon the man who starts to dig them up. The adroit chord manipulations form a fine lesson for those able to receive it.

308. The harmony of Variation 9 is scarcely to be reviewed as that of Brahms, so closely is it an adaptation of No. 5 of Schumann's "Bunte Blätter," to the purpose of varying the theme of No. 4. That of No. 10, however, is almost bewildering; for Brahms has taken the bass of Schumann's theme and not only used it as his melody, but given it a bass consisting of *its own inversion*! Then, as if that were not enough, he has added a canon in contrary motion in his two upper parts, besides diminutions; and, finally (at the fourth bar from the close), he has artfully inset a scrap of Clara Wieck's melody for which Schumann composed Variations as his Op. 5. In the name of all that is reasonable the least to happen under these circumstances should be a variation of proportionate "ugliness"; but, instead of that, it forms a beautiful slow movement with strains altogether unhampered by the marvelous things taking place in its course.

309. The harmony of No. 11 is principally remarkable for hovering between the two incongruous keys of G and F sharp minor. Like No. 2 it is an "intermezzo" variation from which we pass on "attaca" to the next.

310. The next harmony features are of kindred nature with those of Variations 8 and 10; that is to say, they consist of skilful manipulations in favour of the canons of which Variations 14 and 15 consist, the former between the two upper, and the latter between the extreme, parts. Variation 16 consists of the original bass very lightly accompanied (in the major) by short and interrupted phrases; the harmonies of which preserve the spirit of those of the original theme, without in the least resembling them.

311. *Rhythm*.—The rhythm of these Variations is almost entirely that of Schumann's theme, which the intention of the work no doubt caused to be held in more than ordinary regard. The departures from it are therefore slight; but occur in various degrees, beginning with those in which the pulsation is quickened by the figuration, and passing on to those in which the time is altered. The only case of any special rhythmical interest is that of Variation 2, doing duty as an intermezzo between Variations 1 and 3; and passing on "attaca" to the latter.



312. *Figuration*.—The amount of figuration in this work is somewhat unusual for Brahms, though its presence is very easily accounted for. It evidently does not arise from any lack of preparedness for the philosophic variation; of which we have a good specimen in No. 2—not to mention Nos. 6, 7, 11 and 13 which might be easily so accounted. But we have already seen how a special devotion to the theme caused him to refrain from his usual indulgence in rhythmic transformations; and to the same reason is to be set down a freer use of the more conventional forms of theme-embellishment. Moreover, it may be noted that these forms also incline to the style of Schumann; as, for example, that of Variation 9, which is precisely similar to Schumann's Op. 99, No. 5; that of Variation 11, which seems to be suggested in Schumann's Toccata; that of Variations 10 and 14, in which the idea of canon in two upper parts and free bass seems to be taken from Schumann's Études Symphoniques, No. 9; and that of Variation 15, in which the figuration highly resembles that of the trio of Schumann's Op. 21, No. 7. All this amounts to a fairly good case that the whole work was designed as a *compliment*; for which reason it excelled most when paying tribute to Schumann's scientific methods, for the special offering of which Brahms' equipment was so colossal.

313. In addition to the instances quoted the general style of figuration is that of Schumann; and rarely, if ever, did Brahms return to the use of any of the forms here employed. The principal instance is perhaps presented by the Intermezzo, Op. 119, No. 2, of which the figuration is the same as that of Variation 4 of the present set.

314. *Form*.—The theme is cast in three eight-bar periods, from which there is practically no departure in any of the variations; the differences in length of which are due either to change of the bar value or to extensions and contractions of phrase.

315. *General characteristics*.—The foregoing descriptions involve the conclusion that, however gracefully effective in the ordinary sense, this piece can only be properly heard by those who already possess some knowledge of what it is intended to convey. Its appeal cannot therefore be correctly assessed without assuming that kind of knowledge on the part of the listener. To know the various works and general style of Schumann of which it is an echo; to be able to appreciate the immensity of the triumph over technical difficulties of which it

is an example; to be familiar with the circumstances which led to its composition and *then* to hear it perfectly played is indeed to enjoy music at the full. No need to "enthuse" in its description, for the plain facts as they have been here set down surpass what could be ventured in mere praise. But behind it all lies the great principle upon which the Brahms variation is founded; and that is—"persistent identity of the bass." However florid, however varied, however removed in all appearance from the parent theme the variation may be, that *identity of the bass* (not necessarily a literal, but always an essential identity) is the connecting link between movements which in every other sense appear to be opposed. Thus, it fortunately happens that, when a composer of the highest grade of accomplishment knows how to school himself into obedience to this principle, he has the reward of finding that he has stooped only to conquer.

## OP. 10. BALLADES.

(*For Pianoforte Solo.*)

Dedicated to Julius O. Grimm.

1. ANDANTE.    2. ANDANTE.    3. INTERMEZZO (ANDANTE).    4. ANDANTE  
CON MOTO.

### FIRST BALLADE.

316. *Key, time and extent.*—In D minor (changing to D major); Andante (changing to “Poco più moto” and “Allegro ma non troppo”); time, common; 73 bars, being 27 for opening andante, 34 for allegro, and 22 for conclusion in Tempo primo.

317. *Thematic material.*—This piece is founded upon Herder’s version of the Scotch ballad entitled “Edward”—a poem to which Brahms again turned his attention some twenty years later, choosing it as the text of the Ballad, Op. 75, No. 1, for contralto and tenor; though the two musical conceptions are entirely distinct. The original upon which Herder’s version is founded may be referred to in Percy’s “Reliques of Ancient English Poetry” (Vol. I, p. 57); but, as Brahms’ lack of acquaintance with English naturally restricted his treatment of the subject to the German mode of expression, we have to bear the latter exclusively in mind in considering his work.

The first subject is in expression of the lines:—

(*Mother*)

“Dein Schwert, wie ist’s von Blut so roth?  
Edward, Edward!”

(Bars 1 to 8)

the “poco più moto” replying:—

*(Edward)*

"O ich hab' geschlagen meinen Geier todt.  
Mutter Mutter!"

(Bars 9 to 13)

What now follows is practically a repetition in expression of the lines:—

*(Mother)*

"Dein Geiers Blut ist nicht so roth?  
Edward, Edward!"

(Bars 14 to 21)

to which the "poco più moto" again replies with its former melody inverted and in marked exemplification of the utility of such device:—

*(Edward)*

"O ich hab' geschlagen mein Rothross todt,  
Mutter, Mutter!"\*

(Bars 22 to 26.)

318. The second subject now appears upon the scene; its development clearly expressing the following text:—

(Bars 1 to 18 of the Allegro.)

*(Mother)*

"Dein Ross war alt und hast's nicht noth,  
Edward, Edward!  
Dich drückt ein andrer Schmerz, Edward!"

*(Edward)*

"O ich hab' geschlagen meinen Vater todt;  
O ich hab' geschlagen meinen Vater todt;  
O weh ist mein Herz, O weh ist mein Herz, O weh!  
O weh ist mein Herz, O weh ist mein Herz, O weh!  
O weh!"

319. This is Herder's third stanza; but Brahms' context makes it clear that at this point there is considerable elision. At any rate, it is impossible on any other ground to explain

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\* The following is the old Scottish version of these lines in Percy's "Reliques":—

Quhy dois zour brand sae drap wi' bluid? Edward!  
O, I hae killed my hauke sae guid, Mither.  
Zour haukis bluid was nevir sae reid, Edward!  
O, I hae killed my reid roan steid, Mither.

the fact that the remainder of the piece seems to speak the words:—

“Auf Erden soll mein Fuss nicht ruh'n, Mutter!  
Auf Erden soll mein Fuss nicht ruh'n, Mutter!  
Fluch will ich euch lassen und höllisch Feuer, Mutter!  
Fluch will ich euch lassen und höllisch Feuer,  
Und höllisch Feuer; denn Ihr—Ihr riethet's mir!”\*—

(Bars 19 to 32 of the Allegro.)

after which the first subject (*sotto voce*) aptly portrays the mother's lament.

320. The expression is far too vivid for this piece to be regarded otherwise than as a musical rendering of the poem. On the other hand, with 70 bars only, and nearly as many lines of text, elision being compulsory, the above is offered as, in any case, a probable solution.

321. The following example will enable the subjects to be identified.



322. *Melody*.—The most striking feature is its “Northern” character, which not even the occasional use of luxuriant harmony seems to dim. As Louis Ehlert says:—“It is characteristic of his nature that he was born in a Northern seaport. Sea air and basses: these are the ground elements of his music,” and the student may find further exemplifications of the same trait by reference to Nos. 5 and 7 of Op. 76; the two Rhapsodies of Op. 79, No. 3 of Op. 117, and No. 4 of Op. 119.

323. *Harmony*.—This is such a strange commingling of modern luxuriance with bald archaisms that none but a born

\* Verses in pars. 318 and 319 in the old Scottish version:—

Zour steid was auld, and ze hae gat mair, Edward!  
Sum other dule ze drie, Edward.  
O, I hae killed my fadir deir. Alas! wae is mee.  
Here nevir mair maun I bee, Mither,  
The curse of hell frae me sall ze beir, sic counsells ze gave to me.

master could have brought them into the same piece without sacrifice of unity in character and purport.

324. *Rhythm*.—Attention is directed to the disregard of the bar-line exhibited in the “*poco più moto*” of the first section, and in the same phrases when recurring at the return to the original key. Also to the free use of phrases of three and five-bar length. There is, in fact, what may not inaptly be described as a “Gregorian” freedom pervading the whole which contributes not a little to the production of the Norse trait alluded to above.

325. *Figuration*.—Of conventional figuration there is absolutely none, unless perchance it may please some to range reiterated chords under that heading.

326. *Form*.—If we disregard the phrase-formations and include under this heading merely the cadre in which the piece is cast it is perfectly regular and lyric.

327. *General characteristics*.—No player can engage in the study of this piece without being struck by the utter contempt exhibited for what is generally deemed pianistic effect. The total absence of figuration would alone be sufficient to point that fact. On the other hand, there is an effect with which it is out of the power of mere pianism to compete—that of the mental picture created. We are fortunate in this instance in that we know exactly what was in the composer’s mind. But this advantage is entirely thrown away unless the listener comes equipped with some knowledge of the subject.

## SECOND BALLADE.

328. *Key, time and extent*.—In D (changing to B minor and major); Andante (changing to Allegro non troppo, doppio movimento); time, common (changing to  $\frac{3}{4}$  for the “*molto staccato e leggiero*” or middle portion of the allegro); 150 bars, being 23 for opening andante, 95 for allegro, and 32 for return section.

329. *Thematic material*.—The subjects clearly delineate the form of epic narrative intended to be conveyed. The first evidently stands for both prologue and epilogue; in the one case announcing the nature of the story, and in the second dwelling upon the moral thence to be drawn. The second subject portrays the exciting events connected with the narrative;

the stress of which is relieved by intervention of a third subject standing to the second apparently as the relation of some brighter episode in the story. The three subjects therefore succeed one another in the order

I 2 3 2 I

with the result of representing five verses of the imaginary poem.



330. *Melody*.—A constant feature of Brahms' melodies is that they are always manly. It was so entirely his nature to incline to a vigorous expression that even in the portrayal of feminine sentiment he always chose those emotions which by nature of their strength allowed of an expansion of his thought in the same direction. Confining ourselves to the pianoforte works we may perhaps take the cradle song as the most tenderly pathetic instance; yet, even in this case, the grief is not effeminate; on the contrary, it is the very association of misery with heroic fortitude which makes its effect so inexpressibly touching. So here. The narrator may be either a male or female character, as it may please our imagination to picture; for the sentiment is so tender that even from a child it would be appropriate. But it is that form of tenderness of which a brave man need never be ashamed.

331. The melody of the Allegro introduces us at once to the difference between melodic expression and "tune." To many, unfortunately, the latter expression symbolises the whole melodic range; but those who would appreciate Brahms have perforce to divest themselves of all such notion before they can proceed. Here we have an agitato which, while metrical enough for "tune," develops an "uncaring" expression as it goes on, becoming (at bar 47) oblivious of restraint and passing on to a change of subject—this time of more cheerful import.

332. A wonderful melodic feature is that presented by the *sostenuto* descending progression commencing at bar 71, crossing the change of *tempo* and passing on to the return of the second subject. At bar 73 and following the supervening gloom is one of those pianistic effects rarely to be found; and, that it is the governing trait of the ballade, is shown by its recurrence at bar 109—10 bars before the epilogue at the change of key. The effect is of course largely dependent upon the harmonies; but the feature itself is melodic, notwithstanding.

333. *Harmony*.—The first subject shows that the composer was no faddist in fine chords. Here the narrator has to state his case and he does so in some charming progressions; but they all hover round the tonic chord. The sudden adoption of the major for only two bars (12, 13) is another trait worthy of note by the intending Brahms student; and it is a hint to him that he must throw off all mawkish sensitiveness with regard to such changes. As Ehlert says—no “enervating self-absorption, no renunciation of effort, no Southern brooding submission to fate”; for this music requires to be listened to in an alert state of mind. The player soon finds its effect to be like that of the fresh cold air, and that he is all the better for it.

334. The harmonies of the middle sections are naturally more ambitious; though, in parsing them, the simplest elements suffice. The tonal progressions commencing at bars 73 and 109 should be *realised* mentally; and only after that *played*; a most exquisite touch being required for their due expression.

335. *Rhythm*.—Anything construable as erratic feature under this heading is confined to the phrase formation, as the broad outline of the piece is in every sense regular.

336. *Figuration*.—The syncopated bass of the first and last section constitutes the only subordinate figure.

337. *Form*.—The form is lyric with interposition of two middle sections and therefore to that extent presents nothing remarkable for the student's attention. But a highly interesting feature is presented by the *ritornelli* commencing at bars 73 and 109 respectively and already referred to under “melody” and “harmony” (q.v.).

338. *General characteristics*.—Utterly unlike anything else that was ever written, yet of such natural expression as to make Huneker say of its first and last sections:—“The theme, so



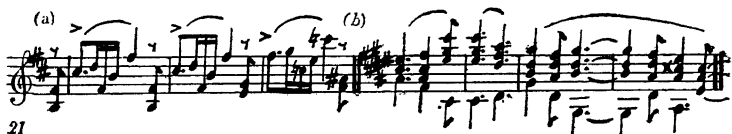
gentle, so winning, so heartfelt, must needs loosen the obdurate heart-strings of a Finck.\* Its return in the luscious key of B is charming and the piece ends in soft æolian harmonies."

It is only fair to add for the reader's consolation that the piece not only demands mental grasp but is admittedly of technical difficulty.

### INTERMEZZO (NO. 3 OF THE BALLADES, OP. 10).

339. *Key, time and extent.*—In B minor (changing to D sharp minor and finishing in B major); Allegro; time,  $\frac{6}{8}$ ; 128 bars noted (but 166 in performance owing to repeat of first section); distributed as 84 in B minor, 50 in D sharp minor, and 32 for the return section in B minor and major.

340. *Thematic material.*—There are two subjects; the second appearing between two versions of the first. In this case the poem suggested is evidently not of the same epic character as in the previous ballades, the musical ideas lending themselves rather to a child-story of hobgoblins; the fitfulness of the opening theme contrasting well in this sense with the "cantabile." Notwithstanding the lack of actual resemblance, the "vision-like" character of the latter recalls Schumann's "Kind im Einschlummern"—the atmosphere being the same; and, if this were Brahms' idea, it would readily account for his considering this piece as only entitled to be named "Intermezzo"—the poetic basis of all the other numbers being more serious.†



\* One of Brahms' foremost adverse critics.

† It is worthy of remark that No. 3 of Op. 117, a piece resembling this in conception, is also named "Intermezzo."

341. *Melody*.—The melody of the first section is entirely a question of rendering, for the meaning *is* the melody, and vice versa; from which it follows that, unless the meaning is brought out, there is no melody at all. It may be admitted that Brahms' unconventional handling of the bar line obscures the rendering to many; but, then, it must be remembered that this difficulty is one which it is a *sine qua non* that the reader should have resolved to overcome. In this connection it may help him if a comparison be drawn between the *sf* in Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 2, No. 3 (Finale, bars 167 and 169) and those of the present section (bars 10 to 13 inclusive, and the like elsewhere).

342. As to the exquisite "Träumerei" from bar 47 the most carefully-worded description would be at fault; because of there being nothing with which to compare it and so fix the idea in the reader's mind. The actual note succession is not remarkable; but the peculiar effect of phrases so delicate being associated with such virile harmony—their irregular extent—the delay set up between them while we are called upon to listen to a distant echo—and their gradually dying away in drooping syncopations all combine to make this a noteworthy portion of the work.

343. *Harmony*.—The harmonies of the middle section are the only special feature under this heading; but the student should well observe that they are all *pure triads*, for considerable meaning thereto attaches. These "ballades" are largely mediæval in conception; and, whatever Brahms might do in their more passionate sections, he was sure to be mindful of mediæval conditions in their purely vocal phrases. He would certainly not use a chord of the seventh without intensity absolutely requiring it; and a prevalence of the triad almost equal to that now remarked upon is observable in the opening sections of Nos. 1 and 2.

344. *Rhythm*.—Only subordinate traits of rhythm appear; but the phrase-formations of the middle-section are, nevertheless, important. Dreaminess is inconsistent with metrical precision; and Schumann's "Träumerei" with its eight bar periods, beautiful as they are, is only a stage dream. Let the student therefore observe that the phrases in this case occur as follows:

50 bars in all, including the echo passages.	{	5 bar phrase and echo passage.
		7 " " " " "
		8 " " " " "
		10 " " " " "
		12 " extension in soft murmur.

and he will then realise something of Brahms' fidelity to Nature in the detail of his work.

345. *Figuration*.—Obviously none; the whole character of the work being in opposition to figuration of any kind whatever. The few passages which present any resemblance to figuration-forms are all essential.

346. *Form*.—The form is lyric, with one middle section, and entire absence of all supplementary feature.

347. *General characteristics*.—Pianoforte literature abounds with compositions in which an extreme delicacy of execution is required. The super-refinement is however mostly devoted to the subordination of filigree work; and to remove the latter and to insist upon regarding such works as they really are is generally to find that our interest is demanded in favour of a mere dressing. This well-known circumstance is here stated for the purpose of conveying to the reader a precise idea of the present composition by asking him to picture to himself the exact contrary. No pianoforte-work ever written could exceed this number in the delicacy of touch required for its performance. Yet from beginning to end there is not a single note anywhere to be found which does not appertain directly to the composition.

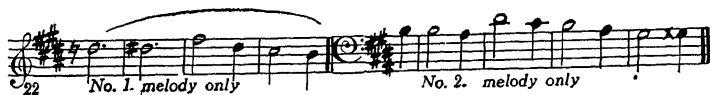
348. Some critics have imagined a resemblance between this work and Op. 4; such views being accounted for by the reasons stated under Op. 117 (No. 2, "Thematic material").

#### FOURTH BALLADE.

349. *Key, time and extent*.—In B (changing to F sharp and B minor); Andante con moto (changing twice to "più lento," final cadence adagio); time,  $\frac{3}{4}$  (changing to  $\frac{6}{4}$ ); 148 bars

(or 155 allowing for repeat of first part of first "più lento") distributed as 46 for opening section, 34 for first "più lento," 62 tempo primo, and 13 for second "più lento."

350. *Thematic material*.—Here there are again two subjects; but, both by their nature and treatment, the message they convey to us is altogether different from any of the preceding. There is no prologue character about the first, for it opens the story frankly with the very first note; and takes us readily captive by a seeming assurance that nothing uncanny in the way of description is in store. There is to be a surprise, however, though quite of another kind; the whispered second subject being a triumph of the form of musical expression which depicts what is told in secrecy and confidence. In this case, at all events, Brahms has given us a good hint of his meaning in the indication "col intimissimo sentimento"; the piece aptly concluding with the same subject "mezza voce"; dying away into silence, as if afraid of being overheard.\*



351. *Melody*.—The melodic feature in this piece assumes a somewhat more conventional type due—needless to say—to poetic requirements alone. As Huneker tells us, Brahms—"would never make any concessions to popularity, but like Henrik Ibsen, he often went out of his way to displease," so that presumably we must be thankful that at all events he has not done so in this case. The opening melody, however, shows the narrator unwilling to waste time, the phrases succeeding one another without break or pause of any kind until the end. Then comes the *tête-à-tête* melody already referred to and which when once mastered may be played a hundred times and each time seem more beautiful than the last. Special attention is directed to the duet effects beginning at the tenth bar of the "più lento" and extending to the fifteenth inclusively. These are as if the listener were interposing his own short observations upon what he was being told. The passages are cer-

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\* In this connection the reader is referred also to Op. 116, No. 5.

tainly difficult to play but are worth any pains expended in their acquirement.

352. *Harmony*.—This feature is at all times so full of interest that the necessity arises of only mentioning that which, even for Brahms, may appear to warrant extra attention; a category under which the following progression may perhaps be reckoned.



The above occurs at bar 133, preceding the final "più lento."

353. *Rhythm*.—The rhythm is duple with occasional extensions of phrase and nothing beyond ordinary modern feature.

354. *Figuration*.—We see exemplified in this piece how conventional features of melody bring with them an increased use of figuration and trace in that the influence of one subject upon the other—an influence which may be stated in the form of precept thus:—

The need for figuration is in inverse ratio to æsthetic import.

355. The present number bears this out exactly; for, interesting as are its contents, the work, in depth of signification, falls short of the others to a marked extent.

356. With regard to the figurations themselves it is truly astonishing that Brahms who seems to have employed this device always so reluctantly should have so thoroughly succeeded in it. He either uses figurations of the very plainest order, so as to give us the impression of an almost contemptuous use; or he invents forms of exceptional grace; for, in the matter of figurations, there seems to be no medium with him: it is always one or other extreme. His best forms however are never complicated. What makes them sometimes difficult is not their design, but the persistency with which he carries it out; a persistency which may or may not lead to technical botherations—for about that he seems very little to care. In the present case the figuration of the first section (occurring in

two forms) are fairly easy; but that is merely as the fates have willed it. As for that of the whispering "più lento" section it is simply elementary.

357. *Form*.—The form is lyric, with two subjects proceeding in the order

I, 2;—I, 2,

which the reader may compare with the arrangement of the second "ballade," described under its "Thematic material" heading (q.v.).

358. *General characteristics*.—The characteristic of all these "ballades" is that they are not set pieces like those of Chopin. In them the pianist is not a person to be even thought of. Indeed the greatest compliment he can receive is to be completely forgotten; whilst the mind of the listener dwells only upon such ideals as his power of imagination may enable him to form. The reason why the last number is inferior to the others is that the figurations in it cause the "performer" to intrude. In the former numbers we were centred upon the *facts* of each narrative: in this, we listen merely to an account of them in song, to the accompaniment of an instrument.

\*\* These Ballades have been arranged for piano duet by Friedrich Hermann.

# OP. 15. CONCERTO NO. 1, IN D MINOR.

(For Piano and Orchestra.)

MAESTOSO ADAGIO RONDO (ALLEGRO NON TROPPO).

Scored for 2 Flutes, 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets, 2 Bassoons, 4 Horns,  
2 Trumpets, Drums and Strings.

MAESTOSO.

359. *Key, time and extent.*—In D minor, changing to B flat minor, F minor, F major, B minor, F sharp minor, and D major; Maestoso, changing to “poco più moderato” (twice) and “più animato”; time,  $\frac{6}{4}$  (2 bars of  $\frac{9}{4}$  during the orchestral introduction); 484 bars, being 90 to end of orchestral introduction, 66 to third subject in F at “poco più moderato,” 69 to “Tempo primo,” 155 to return of third subject in D and 63 to final “più animato.”

360. *General description.*—Despite all talk of “innovation” this work presents the old-time feature of opening with a long orchestral introduction so compact that but little adjustment would be required to make it entirely self-sufficient. It provides us with a compendium of the leading subjects excepting the song-group, marked “poco più moderato,” which afterwards becomes such a leading feature; and, returning to the subject with which it opened, gradually subsides in phrases which suggest the entrance of the solo.



361. Now it is that the symptoms occur which so startled the Leipzigers in 1859.\* Instead of subsiding at entrance of the solo, as, according to all previous notions of concerto-decorum it ought to do, the orchestra soon evinces a desire to dispute matters; and the experience of thirty bars, until appearance of the next subject, is quite enough to create the apprehension that matters will grow worse as the movement proceeds. There now follow in the solo part two episodes which tend to prove this; as they require the orchestra for their completion. But, in the song group which follows, the piano for 19 bars is *quite alone*; so that, considering the part played by the orchestra in the movement generally, the contrast here offered is extreme. The new subject opens thus:



362. But this is not the only contrast; for *revanche* has to be taken for the idleness of the orchestra above alluded to. Accordingly, the cantabile subject develops an agitato rise and fall; the orchestra stealing in with 8 bars (*pp*, in D flat, sostenuto style) just as the piano subsides. These 8 bars modulate to F; when, as the orchestra commences to repeat the subject in that key, the piano enters; and the expatiation which ensues is so free, as well as lengthy, that, but for ingenious allusions to previous thematic material, we should begin to feel some qualms upon the subject of coherence. This portion of the work naturally corresponds with the *Durchführung* in ordinary sonata form; and a certain freedom is, therefore, not only permissible but expected. It must be confessed that the privilege is eminently one which Brahms has not forgotten—some might even say that it had been abused. At any rate, the resultant solo part is of the most arduous description which can be imagined; and one all the more difficult to prepare for

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\* Compare § 84 and following.



concert use in consequence of the "solo" being a mere factor in the ensemble, or, as the Leipzigers insisted, no solo at all. It is very natural that all this should tend to a dislike of such work on the part of those who are not willing to pause and enquire whether the old solo should ever have existed at all. The traditional name of "solo" will of course linger; but the piano concerto is *ensemble* music, and requires to be treated as such by composer and player alike.

363. From the point above described everything proceeds in orderly fashion to the end of the movement which is in *bravura*. The reappearance of the song-group is in D; and, for 19 bars, is unaccompanied, as before. The greater part of the episodial work is transposed and adapted from the preceding.

364. Viewed as technical exercise the movement is marvellously comprehensive. A whole collection of studies not only might, but should, be wrought from it by any student resolved to conquer its details. Schumann's Paganini advice quite applies to this case—*Nehme einzelne Stellen heraus*\*—especially as the context in this concerto continually requires the band for completion of its meaning, and no satisfaction is to be derived from playing the solo part straight through.

## ADAGIO.

365. *Key, time and extent*.—In D; Adagio; time,  $\frac{6}{4}$ ; 103 bars, being three "tuttis" of 13, 13 and 8 bars respectively—the solo instrument engaged during the remainder and the cadenza before the final "tutti" being accounted as one bar.

366. *General description*.—It would be easy enough to construe this movement as composed of three subjects; but, for practical purposes, there is only one. This is announced firstly in 13 bars of orchestral prelude, and then in about the same number of bars for piano and orchestra combined. The chromatic work which succeeds to this is more suitably regarded as episodial; notwithstanding its retaining a similar relation to the theme at the return.

367. The movement is sectioned at about half way through by re-introduction of the orchestral prelude with fuller instru-

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\* Practise the passages separately.

mentation, this being preceded by a new melody given to clarinets and oboes successively. The principal solo display occurs after the repeat of the orchestral prelude; when the piano, having taken up the first subject, proceeds to some perfunctory elaboration. The opening of the solo in each case is not the real theme. This must be taken from the orchestral prelude quoted below; the student being reminded that the phrase commences with bar 2.

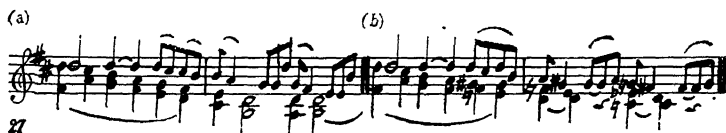


368. Solidity of structure is here the leading feature; and, whether intentionally or otherwise, this firmness of basis has been made use of to bind together materials which, but for its cementing influence, would have fallen asunder. The music itself seems here and there to indicate that this reliance existed; for otherwise the solo would scarcely have embarked at once, after the prelude, with an elaborate expatiation. This opening discourse of the solo taken in conjunction with the prelude forms the real inspiration of the movement; for it may be feared that, however fine the workmanship of the remainder, or even however nearly it may approach that ethereal idiom which is so difficult to define, it only exists for the sake of this portion; and, at best, can only beguile us while we wait.

369. Throughout this formidable work there is nothing so calculated to set the student in love with it and so incite him to the endeavour to fathom its entire beauty as the section of this movement consisting of its *prelude and solo as far as bar 27*, which he will find to be entirely complete within itself, as is also the corresponding return group extending *from bar 59 to 87 inclusive*; the latter bar offering a perfect D.C. for return to the original prelude, and so providing two pieces for separate practice. If these two portions are well studied to begin with

no persuasion will be necessary to proceed to the whole; but much depends upon accuracy of rhythmical survey because, on entry of the solo, the phrase length changes, and, with it, the entire meaning. The following few words on this subject may therefore be of assistance.

370. The first bar of the prelude is initial; the phrase, which is of 4-bar length, commencing with the next. We have then three 4-bar phrases leading to the solo. But the solo opens in *3-bar rhythm*; a fact of the utmost importance to recognise. The same thing of course happens on return of the same solo at bar 71; though in the latter case a greater complexity causes it to be somewhat obscured. When scanned with a full knowledge of the formation of their sentences these two portions, which to all intents and purposes are separate pieces and may be used as such, become as clear as noonday; even their technical difficulty seeming to be thereby reduced. The two solo entrances, occurring at bars 13 and 71 respectively, are here exhibited in conjunction; but the preceding orchestral bars should in each case be included for study.



In the portions represented by the above example the left-hand plays exactly the same notes an octave below.

371. Having so far studied the movement the student may attach the beautiful Cadenza at bar 95; and either D.C. or conclude. He will now find himself practically in possession of the movement, all that remains being the new material which divides the sections, and which should be separately studied. This portion is however only available for use with the orchestra, whereas that referred to above is of service for private enjoyment.

372. Finally, the student should note the thematic resemblances between Examples 24 and 27, which form an effective reminder of the first movement.

## RONDO.

373. *Key, time and extent.*—In D minor (changing to B flat and D, concluding in D major); Allegro non troppo (changing to “meno mosso” with “più animato” for conclusion); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 526 bars, including 137 for orchestra alone distributed in twelve tuttis, the longest of which occur early in the movement.

374. *General description.*—The plan of this movement seems to be a gradual expansion of the rondo cycle. Its thematic material produces an effect of great variety; though, in respect of origin, it is extremely spare. The original theme is, for example, ultimately replaced in paraphrase; but the features of this paraphrase are from an incidental fugato forming part of the development of a cantabile subject. And even this cantabile subject may be traced back to the opening; which it resembles both in rhythm and in note succession, differing only in key and bar-subdivision. On the whole therefore the piece may be pronounced to be a rondo in more senses than one.

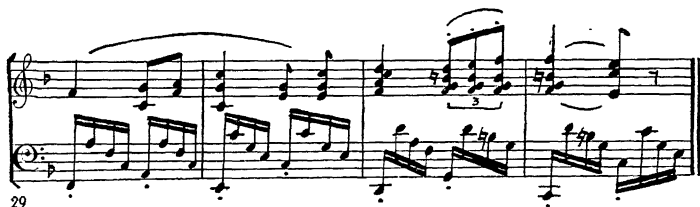
375. Brahms' peculiar aptitude for variation form has been brought into play here, for although there are six subjects, and although they cannot be said to resemble one another in the least degree, they create in our minds the suspicion of a common origin. Next to the variation-form itself there is no field like the rondo for displaying this variation faculty; the perfect rondo being one in which the utmost variety may be presented, but only on condition of the original sentiment being left intact.

376. The opening theme therefore being one of rustic joviality permeates the movement and fixes its general character. Opening as under:—



it proceeds for 8 bars when, the orchestra taking it up, the solo proceeds with a continuous semiquaver figuration similar to the bass of the above example. Some 30 bars are occupied by the first exposition.

377. The next cycle contains three subjects as usually accounted in analyses, but a better view is obtained by regarding the first and third of these as episodial. The second is in F; and, while sustaining the original joviality, it nevertheless approaches in expression the second subject of the first movement; as may be here perceived by comparing the following with Example 25:—



378. There is an extremely interesting orchestral episode in continuous syncopated quaver chords—too long for quotation but which the reader will readily identify—which now intervenes before the next return and adroitly serves the composer's purpose by inducing a lull before the next outburst of solo display.

379. The next return of the theme is rounded off by a "tutti" of 14 bars (4 + 4 + 2 + 4) cadencing in the tonic and proceeding to the cantabile subject in B flat. This subject although of such vast importance is never played literally by the solo instrument but merely expatiated upon as we have already seen to be the case with the principal subject of the slow movement, and these two instances will serve the reader as illustrations of that essentiality of the orchestra of which so much has been said and of which full particulars are given in the "Notes" which follow. The following quotation of the B flat subject is therefore that of its orchestral opening:—



380. The next feature of interest is the fugato evolved from the above, in which the orchestra has it all its own way for 37 bars—a long time for the solo instrument to keep silent and seeming to have been intended to favour structural symmetry by dividing the moment practically into two parts. The subject of this fugato is of 4-bar length and, by embodying the essentials of the themes already quoted, makes the return of the solo with a new version of the first subject quite an easy matter. But with the fugato itself the piano has nothing to do, and it may therefore be described as a constant feature that Brahms does not consider it necessary to confide the statement of important subjects to the solo in any form; and that, in his conception of the concerto, this may or may not happen.

381. The development of the next cycle is extremely animated; though, as it consists principally of subjects already quoted, the material for present comment is slight. The subject of Ex. 29 appears now in the tonic and that of Ex. 30 in the tonic major. Once in the latter key so we remain to the end of the movement; and being constantly beset by tonic influences the listener cannot fail to note that we are approaching conclusion. The "*meno mosso*" opens with a tonic pedal and the "*più animato*" does the same. Even the 17-bar cadenza just before the end is entirely upon a dominant pedal; and, by breaking off suddenly with a general pause bar, leaves the final "*Tempo I*" nothing to do but to state the key. Thus ends this epoch-making work.

### NOTES ON CONCERTO, OP. 15.

382. This work figures somewhat largely in the early history of the composer but, for purposes of these notes, the story

may be taken up when it was performed at Leipzig by Clara Schumann, and when the Leipzig public, imbued with the feeling that they owed the composer some amends for having hissed it in 1859, not only received it with marked demonstrations of favour but shortly afterwards invited Brahms to their city with every possible sign of welcome.

383. They had indeed some reason to rectify their position, for they had in the meantime received even the German Requiem with considerable coolness; notwithstanding the enthusiasm it had created in other parts of Germany; besides which their critic, J. Schucht, had gone so far as to give Brahms public advice to the effect that he would have been wiser to become a follower of Wagner, Berlioz and Liszt, without anyone being found to raise a voice in his favour.

384. Yet it is so easy to be wise after the event that prudence suggests a recall of the original circumstances which are well stated by Fuller-Maitland as follows:—

“The independence of structure and absence in this work of the usual characteristics of Concertos, such as bravura passages, raised a storm of opposition. The performance itself was an indubitable failure; and it was not till 1878 when he played it again that it was received with anything like enthusiasm. Yet in the interval it had been played by Clara Schumann and others and had enjoyed favour all over Germany.

“It is perhaps not altogether surprising that this work should have been longer than most of Brahms’s music in finding general acceptance; it is uncompromising in its earnestness and occasionally there occur passages which must have seemed uncouth when it was first heard.

“In spite of Brahms’ close study of the piano his playing was scarcely of a kind to produce a great effect upon the general public independently of the composition. Schumann decried it as turning the piano into a full orchestra, and the testimony of those who heard him most frequently shows that it was technically far more energetic than accurate, and that the grandeur of the conception impressed the hearers far more than any exhibitions of merely manual skill.”

385. These palliative suggestions are of course excellent; but they do not include mention of the crowd of critics who proclaimed the work to be “no concerto at all,” and who deported themselves as if they had been extremely witty in chris-

tening it a "symphony with piano obbligato." Moreover, though so many have written upon the subject, none refer to the young composer in his disappointment; or to the injustice to him made obvious by the fact that the view he then took of the concerto has since prevailed.

386. One great obstacle to the spread of public acquaintance with this work arose from the extreme reluctance of virtuosi to take it up. "No wonder," says Carl Beyer "that virtuosi should look upon the Brahms concerto as unthankful; for they had long been accustomed to regard such compositions as mere concoctions arranged to show off their execution in the manner best calculated to secure the admiration of the public."

387. Then there was also the general seriousness of the music—a quality which even to this day is an impediment. But the tide of this adverse influence is nowadays partly stemmed by the eloquent voices raised—not so much in special defence of Brahms as in explanation of the relation of such matters to art generally. Of this kind of comment the words of Hadow form a worthy example. He is speaking of those who find Brahms too grave and earnest; and adds:—

" . . . The same may be said of Æschylus and Dante, of Milton, of Wordsworth. . . . Music is an art of at least the same dignity as poetry or painting; it admits of similar distinctions, it appeals to similar faculties, and in it, also, the highest field is that occupied with the most serious issues.

" . . . If we are disposed to find fault with Brahms because the greater part of his music is grave and earnest, let us at least endeavour to realise how such a criticism would sound if directed against the 'Divina Commedia' or the 'Agamemnon,' or 'Paradise Lost.'"

388. Another drawback to proper appreciation is due to a failure on our part to realise the "absolute" character of this music. There *are* times with Brahms when his classicism relaxes; for he sometimes, even though rarely, prefixed mottoes to his instrumental pieces, thereby allowing us to gather what he had in mind during their composition. At other times the form and style of the compositions themselves were sufficient to indicate something of the same nature; as, for example, the "ballades." But apart from such instances he had no sympathy with the programmatic tendencies of the age and all



attempt to append fancy pictures where he had none such in view is not only inartistic—it is unfair. When this kind of thing is allowed without protest it next happens that the composer is judged by an altogether fictitious standard; for, when once a “programme” is in vogue the public can scarcely be expected to know whether it is that of the composer or not.

389. These comments are perhaps somewhat invidious, considering that “programmes” go, as a rule, with good intentions. The reader must therefore judge of the matter for himself by an application of it to the present work.

390. One authority informs us that in the opening Maestoso the principal theme “springs into our presence like some armoured knight on horseback. While love of battle is evident at his first aspect the softer side of the hero’s character is soon shown”—and of course expressed in Cantabile. Then the hero is supposed to have sunk into sweet dreams, during which “he perceives as in the far distance some inexpressible happiness. Suddenly he rouses himself and”—

391. This sudden rousing represents a slight quandary into which the programme-writer had fallen; but, to show himself equal to the emergency, he adds—“as if to express the reflection that such brooding in a warrior is unseemly”—and so on. In fact the only occasion in respect of which one can agree with him at all happens when he couples “moonshine” with his interpretation of the slow-movement.

It is only the kindly intention of such descriptions which enables us to overcome the reluctance to censure them in stronger terms.

★★ This Concerto has been arranged for four hands on one piano by the composer; four hands on two pianos by the composer; eight hands on two pianos by Theodor Kirchner.

## OP. 21, NO. 1. VARIATIONS ON AN ORIGINAL THEME.

(For Pianoforte Solo.)

### THEME AND ELEVEN VARIATIONS.

392. *Key, time and extent.*—The theme and all the Variations are in D major with the exception of Variations 8, 9 and 10, which are in the minor. The *tempi* are  $\frac{3}{8}$  and  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; the former belonging to the theme with Variations 1 to 6 and finale, and the latter to Variations 7 to 10 inclusive. Variations 1, 3, 4, 9 and 10 are without indicated degree of movement, the inference being that there is no change in their case from the preceding. On that basis the movements are—Theme and Variations 1, 5 and 11 poco larghetto (the latter having an accelerando and return to Tempo I), Variations 2, 3, 4 and 6 “più moto”; No. 7, “Andante con moto,” and Nos. 8, 9 and 10, “Allegro non troppo.” The extent of the Theme and Variations 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 10 is 19 bars, Variation 4, 18 bars; Variation 5, 24 bars (canon); Variations 8 and 9, 20 bars; and Variation 11 (the finale) 89 bars.

393. *Thematic material.*—The attraction of the theme in this case does not lie in its individual effect so much as in its characteristic as a variation-basis. A theme consisting of duple phrases and scanty modulation may be varied by “embellishment”—filigree-work being that which it is best able to support. But for the philosophic variation, such as Brahms set out to produce, it is always necessary that there should be differences in the length of phrase symmetrically placed, as well as modulations of such marked character as to be easily recognisable in future forms by rhythmic aid alone\*—that is to say, without the direct aid of the theme itself. Each of

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\* This is the essence of the Chaconne. See under “Thematic Material,” Op. 119, No. 2.

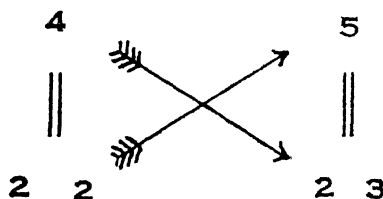
these qualities is abundantly evident in the present case; with the result that, from end to end, the theme hovers over the variation without ever coming into contact with it.



394. *Melody*.—It follows from the foregoing that there is a separate melody for each variation. That of No. 1 takes the form of a dialogue for the hands alternately. In No. 2 the continuous-semiquaver figure of No. 1 is utilised as accompaniment throughout and a new melody given to the right hand. No. 3 has a melody formed from the same description of chord-sequence as that used in Beethoven's Op. 26 (Variation IV of first movement) of which it is therefore a reminder. The melody of No. 4 is a continual flow of semiquavers arranged in quaver pulsations of two-note slurs, each pulsation beginning with the note with which the last concluded. The melody of No. 5 is a canon in contrary motion. That of No. 6 is a continuous flow of quaver pulsations represented by subdivision of the beat into triplet-semiquavers for each hand. The melody of No. 7 is evolved from two widely dispersed semiquavers for the hands, alternately following the general contour and modulations of the theme. That of No. 8 is the same conception more boldly presented by harmonisations and doubling in the octave. To accord with this the time is also quicker and the general effect impetuous. The melody of No. 9 is a development of the preceding, in which five chords at semiquaver-distance for the hands combined are formed into a short phrase. The successive phrases so formed follow the general outline of the theme; a march-like effect being given to them by the invariable interspersions of a short tremolo for the left hand. The melody of No. 10 is a *sostenuto* for right hand against a murmuring semiquaver-figure of the left; the latter being not continuous, but broken up into fragments consisting of the semiquavers of the  $\frac{2}{4}$  bar, with omission of the first and last. The melody of the finale is a free expatiation in the spirit of the original theme.

395. *Harmony*.—The harmonies are principally those of the original theme. The principal modifications of this occur in Variations 8, 9 and 10; these being in the minor and introducing progressions brought about by the change of mode, but conforming in all cases to the spirit of the theme.

396. *Rhythm*.—The rhythm of the theme is that which gives the entire piece its character. The whole is comprised within two periods of nine bars; the rhythmisation of each being the same, but construable in various ways. *Prima facie* these differences in scanning should only be applied as suitable to the changing character of successive variations; but there is always a temptation to use them in expression of the player's mood, and there can be no doubt that "temperamental" pianists often do so quite unconsciously. A simple diagram will make the whole of this plain:—



The broadest survey is to treat the 9 bars as 4 + 5. But, as the 4 and 5 may both be subdivided consistently with the phrase formation, it follows that, in addition to this broad rhythmisation, the following are possible, and more or less suitable—according to the character of variation:—

- (a) 2 + 2 + 5
- (b) 4 + 2 + 3
- (c) 2 + 2 + 2 + 3.

Generally speaking, the more rapid and impetuous the variation the more the rhythm shows an inclination to collapse; and vice versa. In some sets of variations the range of choice in rhythmisations is greater than in others—often, in an extremely slow movement, going so far as to elevate the individual bar to the position of an entire phrase. That, however, does not happen in the present case; though each of the varieties just

indicated are occasionally applicable. The continuous motion has prevented much from appearing in the way of indication; but Brahms himself has opened Variation 1 with an evident 4-bar phrase (shown by the right hand responding at that distance) and Variation 5 by a 2-bar phrase (shown by entry of the second part in the canon at that distance). The most natural rhythmisation of the theme is  $4 + 2 + 3$ ; and to that it will be best for the student to adhere, so long as the character of the variation does not seem actually to demand a departure from it.

397. *Figuration*.—This feature, generally so unimportant in the works of Brahms, has naturally a different position in those consisting of variations. But his figurations differ from those in general use by evolving their own theme in many cases, instead of forming only an accompaniment. This happens so frequently that the shortest way round is to mention those few variations in which it is *not* the case; and these are—No. 2, in which the bass accompaniment figure is borrowed from the previous variation; No. 5, in which the middle note of each triplet of the left-hand part is merely used to preserve a continuous motion; the octave dispersions of No. 6; and the bass figure of No. 10.

398. *Form*.—The form throughout is entirely that of the Theme; from which the Finale only differs by the addition of a Coda, conceived so entirely in the same spirit as to be divisible into settings.

399. *General characteristics*.—We are told by Florence May in her delightful book about Brahms that these Variations “show the composer in one of his Bach-Beethoven-Brahms moods.” The lordly critics of Brahms are a goodly company; but the expression just quoted describes the case better than any of their writings. Though it may be curious to see three great composers thrown into one adjective there is no other way of driving the description home; though of course it only extends to the record of a general impression—to which record, by the way, it may be added that Variation 1 bears a distinct trace of Chopin’s Prelude, Op. 28, No. 5.

400. As for the characteristics of this piece in detail, they all fall under the description of the philosophic variation already given in Chapter VI (General Treatise), and the reader is referred to § 86, as bearing upon such points. Beyond those

remarks only one reference is necessary; that, namely, to the technical independence exhibited, and to the consequent improvement in that direction for which these variations provide the opportunity.

★★ These Variations have been arranged as a piano duet by Robert Keller.

## OP. 21, NO. 2. VARIATIONS ON A HUNGARIAN SONG.

(For Pianoforte Solo.)

### THEME WITH THIRTEEN VARIATIONS AND FINALE.

401. *Key, time and extent.*—The Theme and Variations 7 to 13 inclusive are in D major; Variations 1 to 6 inclusive are in D minor, and the Finale opens and closes in D major; but changes to D minor, B flat and B flat minor. The theme (which is repeated at end of the finale), as well as Variations 1 to 8 inclusive, is practically in  $\frac{7}{4}$  time (divided as 3 + 4); the notation being in alternate bars of  $\frac{3}{4}$  and common time. Variation 9 is in  $\frac{6}{8}$ ; and from Variation 10 to the end (including the finale) is in  $\frac{2}{4}$ . The movement of the theme is “allegro”; which is changed, at Variation 7, to “poco più lento.” This remains until the Finale; which is marked “Allegro, doppio movimento”; the tempo primo being resumed for repetition of the theme to conclude. The length of the theme is 8 bars, in  $\frac{3}{4}$  and common time alternately; amounting to 4 bars of  $\frac{7}{4}$  practically. Variations 1 to 8 inclusive are all of this length; Variations 9 to 12 being also of 8 bars each, but in  $\frac{2}{4}$  time. Variation 13 has 11 bars; and passes on “attaca” to the Finale, which is of 130 bars.

402. *Thematic material.*—The theme in this case is extremely short; for, although it occupies 8 bars in notation (alternate common and  $\frac{3}{4}$  time), its length is really only 4 bars of  $\frac{7}{4}$  time. The consequence is that it lacks a principal desideratum—that of a striking modulation; but it possesses the quality usually relied upon to atone for this (that, namely, of a salient rhythm) in a remarkable degree. As might be expected, Brahms has made the most of this, as well as the least of the defect alluded to; and, as the theme itself does not

modulate, he has made several of his variations do so in the best situation for the purpose, the third 2-bar phrase. But, with all his skill, the defect remains; and these variations are not as good as those of the first part of this opus.



403. *Melody*.—There is, as usual with Brahms, a distinct melody for each variation; though in this case, as above stated, the rhythm is the feature most relied upon for effect. The melody of Variation 1 (which is a passacaglia setting in the minor) throws the bass-theme into relief by always timing its motion to take place during the latter's *sostenuto*.<sup>\*</sup> Variation 2 is a horn-melody; rhythmised by cessation of the bass during the first portion of each  $\frac{7}{4}$  bar. In Variation 3 the rhythmisation of the second portion of the  $\frac{7}{4}$  bar is enforced by subdividing it; the rhythm in this case being therefore 3 + 2 + 2, and the clearness thus obtained enabling the bass figure to be used continuously. In Variation 4 there is an isolation of the first beat by its being made to appear as the “dux” in canon. The result is, therefore, a new aspect of the  $\frac{7}{4}$  rhythm; that, namely, of 1 + 2 + 4. The influence of an appreciation of this fact upon performance is considerable. In Variations 5 and 6 the same means is resorted to, the variety resulting from the melodies themselves; as well as from the inversion of parts—the upper parts of Variation 5 being practically the lower of Variation 6; and vice versa. Variation 7 is practically another Passacaglia setting. In Variation 8 the original melody is entirely present in the upper part; which is, however, subordinated to a tenor melody. In Variation 9 the original melody is represented by fragmentary allusions to it in the upper part; the plan being that of a gradually descending bass. In Variations 10 to 13 inclusive the melody

<sup>\*</sup> This authoritative illustration confirms the principle described in the author's “How to Compose,” § 21; where Ex. 13 of that work expressly shows how rhythmic motion may result from co-operating parts.



is evolved from figurations in the upper part; the finale being, as before, a free expatiation in the spirit of the theme.

404. *Harmony*.—As explained under "Thematic material" this departs freely from that of the theme, and is evidently relied upon to colour the salient rhythmical situations with a view to their enforcement. The interest lies therefore in the manner of applying the various progressions and not in the progressions themselves; which, apart from their context, do not offer any novel feature.

405. *Rhythm*.—Much information relating to this feature was inseparable from a description of the "Melody" (q.v.). In addition to what was there said, however, it may be mentioned that, from Variation 9 onwards, the triple element in the  $\frac{7}{4}$  time bar is discarded; and that, as a consequence, these variations have a distinctly commonplace effect in comparison with the others.

406. The rhythm of this piece as hitherto alluded to refers only to the peculiarity offered by the  $\frac{7}{4}$  bar. In the broad sense however that is merely a detail; the real rhythm consisting not in subdivisions of the bar but in the groupings of the bars into phrases and periods. Considered in this light the rhythm is simply  $2 \times 4$ . In other words, it is of a design offering no interest whatever; and this will account for the sudden deterioration at Variation 9 when the conflict between duple and triple time was removed—the fact being that no element of interest remained. This seems to have been felt by the composer himself, or he would not have had occasion to resort to so many devices in the Finale. Even by their aid however the effect is not restored, although some of them display much resource. The student may in this connection derive instruction from referring to the Canon in B flat minor commencing at bar 62 of the Finale.

407. *Figuration*.—The Variations 9 to 13 have figurations of rather commonplace type; but, with those exceptions, the figures bear out the character ascribed to those of Brahms generally. The bass of Variation 2, for example, is really the melody in disguise; and the bass and treble respectively of Variations 5 and 6 fall very nearly under the same description.

408. *Form*.—As in the last set, the form of the theme is never departed from except for the Finale, at the conclusion of which a curious feature is presented by full repetition of the theme. This certainly seems to have been due to a conscious-

ness on the composer's part that some reminder was necessary.

409. *General characteristics*.—Whatever defects may be presented by this set are the result of the choice of theme. At first sight the  $\frac{7}{4}$  bar is attractive and to some extent it may be described as fertile for variation purposes. But that such resource soon comes to an end we have seen proved by the fact that Brahms threw over the unequal bar division at Variation 9; preferring to go on without it. The distinctions in the length of *phrase* as offered by the theme of the previous set were far more valuable for variation purposes than those between various portions of the same bar can ever be; and the effect is easily discernible in comparing these two sets of variations both displaying an equal musicianship but not producing an equal impression.

410. Variation 8 of this set requires a special manner of performance which is not readily describable in words; but which the intelligent student may be enabled to realise by comparing its left hand part with that of Variation 8 of Op. 9.

411. It is also desirable to note that Variations 5, 6 and 9 admit of free rhythmical renderings more in accordance with the Hungarian character than is implied by the notation.

★★ These Variations have been arranged as a piano duet by Robert Keller.

OP. 23. VARIATIONS ON A THEME BY  
ROBERT SCHUMANN.

(For Pianoforte Duet.)

Dedicated to Miss Julie Schumann.

THEME AND TEN VARIATIONS.

412. *Key, time and extent.*—The Theme and Variations 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 10 are in E flat; No. 4 being in E flat minor, No. 5 in B, No. 8 in G minor, and No. 9 in C minor. The time of the Theme and Variations 1 to 4 and 6 and 8 is  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; that of No. 5 being  $\frac{3}{8}$ ; that of No. 7 being  $\frac{6}{8}$ ; and that of Nos. 9 and 10 being common. The indicated degree of movement for the Theme and Variations 1 to 4 is “Leise und innig” (Andante molto moderato); that of No. 5 being “Poco più animato”; No. 6, “Allegro non troppo”; No. 7, “Con moto” (l'istesso tempo); Nos. 8, and 9, “Poco più vivo”; and No. 10, “Molto moderato” (alla marcia). The length is, for the Theme and Variations 3 and 6 to 10 inclusive, 29 bars; for Variations 1 and 5, 40 bars; for Variation 2, 30 bars; and, for Variation 4, 42 bars. In performance, the repeat of second section adds 12 bars to Theme and Variations 2, 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9; also 6 bars to Variation 10.

413. *Thematic material.*—A melancholy interest attaches to this melody; as the following, from Erb, will explain:—

“Based on a theme taken from Schumann’s last work, which, in his derangement, he thought that the spirits of Schubert and Mendelssohn had brought to him.

“He had jotted down the theme and later, in a lucid interval, had written some variations upon it; had been seized with another attack, and, as soon as he was better, gone back

and finished them. The composition is not to be found among the published works of Schumann."

414. It is a simple hymn-like tune; interesting enough in its first part, but weakly constructed in the second; about the last theme we should expect Brahms to choose, and probably the last he would have chosen without special cause to induce him to do so.



415. *Description.*—Variation 1 is a mere figuration in semiquaver motion; and one which might reasonably be reproached with being too "obvious" in its references. It is certainly an artistic decoration of the theme—but that is all. A variation by Brahms—but not a Brahms-variation.

416. Variation 2 enables us to salute the composer personally once more. It is not a variation of the philosophic order; but neither is it a merely ingenious dressing of crude material, and the evolution of the theme from a crowd of dissimilar notes may be only musicianly, but is wonderfully well-managed.

417. Variation 3 is in the gentle *agitato* motion which results from setting two notes against three, but the extra warmth resulting from this procedure represents the only emotional progress; this variation being, in point of conception, upon the same level as No. 2.

418. Variation 4 is in the minor; though not in the least to be confounded with the old-style and inevitable "minore"; which was generally only the theme over again with change of mode and other discomforts. The present reminders of the theme have, on the contrary, all the freshness of new music; the modulations of the second section being especially effective. Enharmonic change was of course to be expected; Brahms' travel in modulation being invariably rapid, but, as complication in this respect merely concerns notation, it need not be regarded. Moreover, the F sharp dominant pedal of this variation is a distinctly artistic preparation of the mind of the

listener for the next; the whole set bearing the character of a continual advance, as we have seen by the extreme simplicity displayed at the beginning, and by the gradually growing interest ever since. That interest is destined still to grow, as we shall presently find; though whether, as a question of artistic principle, it is well for variations so to progress as they go on, and thus to appear finally as if they had forsaken the original character; or whether it is artistically more correct to allow the first variation to be in some sort of a key to the remainder is a question to be borne in mind, although it does not fall within our present scope to discuss it.

419. Variation 5. A reference to the "epitome" at the end of this notice will show the reader something of the position occupied by this variation, but nothing but a reference to the music itself can adequately show him the beauty of it. This consists in the exquisite paraphrase being at once so near to, and yet so far from, the theme. It is the ideal variation of its kind: not the philosophic variation with a distinct purpose of its own which it argues with you; but the meeting with an old friend in a far-off land.

420. Variation 6. The return to E flat which signalises the entry of this variation is no less beautifully managed than was the previous departure from the same key. The style of treatment at once offers a contrast to the sentiment of the previous setting; but notwithstanding an increase of speed there is no falling off of dignity, the present variation being brought to a level with its predecessor in this respect by the solidity of its progressions, and rock-like coherence of its phrases. The treatment of the second section (which is a naturally weak portion of the theme itself) is beyond all praise; the bold key-wandering sequence leading back to E flat in the happiest manner.

421. Variation 7. This variation is cast in an agreeable form of dialogue, the scraps of speech having an exquisite correspondence with the original rhythm and reminding us once more of how completely Brahms regarded the pulsation as the embodiment of whatever subject he took in hand. Most expressively, the duet effect is suspended and monologue resorted to for commencement of the second section; thus rendering the combined voices for the last phrase a perfect realisation of the original picture, though beautified by an entirely new colouring.

422. Variation 8. The reversal of process was quite a passion with Brahms, as we perceive by his love of inversions, and by his continually giving us two samples of the same kind of work. So here. For Variation 5, the previous tonic was taken as third of the new key. Now, the previous third is taken as tonic of the new key; and, like Bach, he shows himself alive to the artistic value of even the smallest symmetrical observances.

423. As regards the variation itself a special vocation is fulfilled by its *agitato*—the result of a conflict of bar-subdivisions. Apart from this it is a fine spirited setting though its significance in relation to the entire composition is of greater importance.

424. Variation 9. This Variation naturally represents the climax; and, by its energy and seriousness, as well as by its declamatory style, forewarns us that we are approaching the end. With true artistic feeling this vigorous display has been somewhat relaxed for commencement of the second section; only, of course to be immediately afterwards resumed; this being necessary not only for completion of the variation when considered separately, but also in order that, by returning to the march-like rhythm, the finale (or more properly the recall of the theme) might be more naturally approached.

425. Variation 10. This Variation is a simple transformation of the theme, "*alla marcia*"; and takes the place of what would, no doubt, have been a plain repetition, but for the extreme energy of the last setting. It is, as it were, the home-coming after an exciting journey; and, true to that idea, proceeds with increased calmness to the close.

## EPITOME OF THE SET.

Variation 1.—A simple figuration of the theme.

Variation 2.—First evolution of the theme.

Variation 3.—Melodic paraphrase with accompaniment in cross-rhythm.

Variation 4.—(Relative minor.) Solemn and modulative; giving special prominence to dominant of coming key.

Variation 5.—Key change from relative minor showing maximum of contrast with least disturbance.



Triple bar-formation and triplet beat subdivision.

Variation 6.—Return to original bar-formation (now Allegro) but with retained triplet subdivision of the beat.

Variation 7.—Time change to  $\frac{6}{8}$ , therefore triplet subdivision of half-bar.

Variation 8.—Mixed rhythms, agitato effect, and *più vivo*.

Variation 9.—Violent scale-sweeps brought to the aid of emphasis. (Relative minor in preparation for return.)

Variation 10.—Melody in simple march paraphrase.

\*\* These Variations have been arranged for two pianos (four hands) by Theodor Kirchner; who has also made a solo arrangement, referred to (February 5, 1878) by the Herzogenbergs, as so excellent that "only one in love with the subject could have written it."

## OP. 24. VARIATIONS AND FUGUE ON A THEME BY HANDEL.

(For Pianoforte Solo.)

### THEME, TWENTY-FIVE VARIATIONS AND FUGUE.

426. *Key, time and extent.*—The theme, as also Variations 1 to 4, 7 to 12, 14 to 20, and 22 to the end (including the Fugue) are in B flat; Variations 5, 6 and 13 being in B flat minor, and No. 21 in G minor. The whole work is in common time ( $\frac{4}{4}$ ) with the exception of Variations 19 and 23 which are in  $\frac{1}{8}$ . There is no indicated degree of movement for any portion of the work except Variation 13, which is marked “*Largamente ma non più.*” The expression however includes the term “*animato*” for Variation 2, “*con vivacità*” for Variation 7, and “*vivace*” for Variations 19 and 23. Including repeats, the length of the theme and of all the variations except No. 15 is 16 bars. The length of No. 15 is 18 bars and that of the Fugue 109 bars.

427. *Thematic material.*—The tune is devoid of all but simple diatonic interest; features calculated to provide a basis for variations of a high order being principally absent. It is also constructed with a squareness so exact as to render its phrases almost painfully obvious; yet there lurks in them a rhythmical figure which by its very persistency has provided Brahms with his requisite opportunity. In the following example this figure is marked by an overhead bracket.



428. *Description.*—Variation 1. Huneker calls the aria “square-toed” and finds this variation humorous. The latter certainly shows a disposition to accentuate the “square-toeishness” rather than to run away from it, for its design is to produce fresh angles by glorifying the “*Nachschlag*”—or in other





again frequently employed; but its frequency is not so much a matter of importance as its employment in situations which do not correspond with those of the theme, and which therefore show that the composer regarded this motive rather in the light of a general reminder.

433. Variation 6 remains in the same key, and is a canon in the octave between the two hands; the part for each being in octaves. At opening of the second section the canon is in contrary motion, but similar motion is afterwards resumed—this time with the left-hand leading. As the canon-melody includes eight instances of the typical figure and these are doubled in the reply it follows that in this variation its presence is extremely pronounced.

434. Variation 7. We now return to the major; the type-figure being treated as a fanfare, and the melody occupying the alto position so favoured by this composer—as we shall see in innumerable future instances. The fanfare effect is artistically favoured by the military rhythm given to the whole; and by the trumpet-like character of the upper-part.

435. Variation 8. Once embarked upon the military rhythm we must expect another instance before quitting it, in accordance with Brahms' well-known habit. It is now treated as a pedal upon tonic and dominant alternately; the variation being in three real parts, each having marked individual traits; and, last but not least, though based upon the same conception as the preceding, being entirely different from it in effect.

436. Variation 9. Just as the military rhythm caused Variations 7 and 8 to flow in natural sequence, so the pedal-bass of the latter causes this to follow from it in equally logical course. The multifarious use of organ-point is here well exemplified; the whole variation consisting of only two bars of actual material continually transposed in illustration of the theme.

437. Variation 10 is the forerunner of the technical method so exhaustively treated in Op. 35; and which, reduced to the simplest terms, consists in changing octave.\* As usual in all such cases the material is of the simplest description; all other effects being sacrificed to the mere brilliancy obtained by transferring an elementary figure from one keyboard-situation to another.

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\* Compare Op. 35, Book II, No. 5.

438. Variation 11 is in three real parts, which may be divided as "quaver motion, semiquaver motion and *sostenuto*"; but without either of these being exclusively contained in any one part. During the first section the three are in upper, lower and middle parts respectively; but no rule is followed for the remainder. This variation is an interesting setting but nothing more; as it lacks the strong individuality elsewhere displayed.

439. Variation 12 is principally remarkable for the strong crotchet pulsation of its bass, which makes itself felt in spite of the *pp*. This, of itself, would not impart much character; but, as a means of lightening the graceful rhythm of the upper part by freeing it from all obligation in respect of the theme, it forms a design well worthy of being noted.

440. Variation 13, though not entitled "Funeral March," is really a noble specimen of that class of composition; and, but for lacking the ordinary Trio-extension, would no doubt have been used in that sense long since. Melodic traits of the theme are present; but, as already mentioned, there is no strictness exhibited in their location.

441. Variation 14. Continual bass semiquaver-motion, as accompaniment to free melody, in sixths, of the upper part. In most of the strong rhythmic situations a shake is attached to the upper right-hand note. The typical figure of the theme is now faithfully restored to its original situations; and, altogether, the reminder provided by this variation is peculiarly forcible.

442. Variation 15 borrows the fanfare rendering of the principal figure (see Variation 7), but contrives to evolve from it a totally new rhythm. This is done not only by an accentuation of the weak quavers of the bar but also by an extension of the fanfare. The exceptional feature of a one-bar extension also appears in the second section.

443. Variation 16. The material for this variation very much resembles that of No. 15; probably intentionally so, as a totally new interest is now provided, and one which derives an increased power from the fact of the motive from which it springs having been already heard. In other words, this variation is practically a canon formed from the leading subject of No. 15.

444. Variation 17. In Variation 12 a prominence in the bass was given to the crotchet-beats 1 to 3. In this variation something of the same prominence is given to the beats 2 to 4.

The normal principal accent is therefore lightened; besides which the figure adopted in the upper part is continually one of two quavers, of which the first, normally unaccented, has the greater prominence. A sort of hobbling effect is thereby produced, giving the variation its character.

445. Variation 18. A kindred effect is here produced by actual and continued syncopations which are transferred from hand to hand and bar to bar all the way through; each hand, as soon as freed from the syncopations, adopting a freely figured form of semiquaver accompaniment.

446. Variation 19. This is one of the most striking variations of the whole set, in which respect it may be coupled with the "Funeral March" of No. 13. This one is an evident "Pastorale" written in old-style with frequent use of the Prall-triller. Master Brahms however announces himself quite clearly, if only by the loving way in which he makes his melody discourse from the alto. It is, however, answered in duet fashion by the soprano, in this case.

447. Variation 20. The splendid harmonic progressions of this variation are perfectly indescribable in words. It may, however, be of some service to mention that they consist of three-note chords in the right hand against octaves in the left, mostly in contrary progression. The tendency of both is chromatic and the modulation extensive. Each four bars is repeated an octave higher, thus making 16 in all; and, for the last three bars the bass having previously been in stately crotchets, joins in the quaver motion.

448. Variation 21. This is the only variation in relative minor, and also the only one, except No. 2, which exhibits anything in the way of rhythmic cross-relation—the latter consisting of right-hand triplet quavers against semiquavers of the left. It is also perhaps the variation in which the atmosphere of the theme is least evident; and, even independently of that, does not possess much character.

449. Variation 22. This variation is a good sample of the "Musette," in addition to which character it also comprises some traits of the "Chaconne." The student is advised to refer to Variation 2 of Op. 35, Book I, and to compare the relations of both these variations to their respective themes, as it is of benefit to trace the features which they possess in common.

450. Variation 23. The "Musette" of the last variation was exclusively in the treble clef; and now, evidently for contrast, we are as exclusively in the bass. The first section is really upon a pedal bass though a forcible participation in the rhythm gives the bass rather the character of an "ostinato." In the second section the spasmodic and frequent changes from *p* to *f* give the variation an exceptional character.

451. Variation 24. In this variation we have another instance of Brahms' "double-working" method, for it is purely and simply an elaboration of the preceding. The above description therefore entirely applies; the only difference being due to the elaboration which is mostly in short scale passages and is both brilliant and demonstrative.

452. Variation 25. In this variation it is impossible to avoid being reminded of No. 8, Book I, of Op. 21, so much so as almost to give one an inclination to extemporise a further variation upon the plan of No. 9 of the former set. It is so unusual for Brahms to repeat an idea, that this seems only to have been favoured in respect of its appropriateness for preceding the fugue.

453. *Fugue*.—This has a two-bar subject, based, of course, upon the theme; the four parts in which it is designed (though not faithfully carried out) being introduced in the order of A.S.B.T. It is essentially a modern fugue, the strictness of the opening being sustained only until the parts are introduced, after which, as far as part-writing is concerned, the treatment is entirely free. By this however only the polyphonic treatment is meant; as, in formal and thematic respects, it carries its regularity to the extent of excluding all purely episodal features. It is in this direction that the merit of the movement principally lies—in the production, that is, of an effect of freedom without its actual exercise. This is particularly noticeable during the middle portion, which corresponds to the development of a sonata movement; as well as in the free use of organ point in either of the extreme parts. Altogether a worthy finale to an important work.

#### NOTES ON OP. 24.

454. These variations form one of the most popular of the Brahms instrumental pieces, but it is impossible even for the

enthusiast to found upon that circumstance any hope of increased popularity for others; all characteristic features of Brahms' music, so far as they relate merely to exterior dress, being here absent; and applause in this case being therefore capable of bearing a second interpretation—that of disapproval of the methods of statement by which Brahms is more generally known. Cross-rhythm—that inveterate trait without which Brahms scarcely seems to be Brahms at all—is here insignificantly represented in Variation 2, syncopation is strangely absent, and even technical mannerisms peculiar to the composer are brought so slightly into requisition that the work stands before us rather as a proof of the master's independence than as any exemplification of his peculiar style.

455. It would seem that Brahms himself was somewhat aware of this; or, at all events, this seems a fair conclusion to draw from the following circumstances.

In 1873 a reaction in favour of the composer was in progress at Leipzig, due largely to the influence and efforts of his friend, Herzogenberg. Madame Schumann had played his D minor Concerto at the Gewandhaus, Kretzschmar had begun to write favourably of him in the "Musikalisches Wochenblatt," and, with the assistance of Riedel and a few of the elect, Herzogenberg began to foresee the possibility of a "Brahms week"; destined at one stroke to eradicate previous false impressions.

456. All this duly happened; Brahms arriving at Leipzig, by special invitation, on January 29, 1874, and the week from thence to February 5 ever remaining a memorable one in his career.

457. His principal solo performance was on February 1 at a chamber-music *matinée* held at the Gewandhaus; and the fact of his choice falling upon these Variations for so important an occasion seems to indicate his reliance upon their being received with favour. It was a special moment for the exercise of some diplomacy; not for his own sake only, but also for the requital of Herzogenberg's efforts on his behalf; and we may be sure that in making the selection he did not forget this.

\*★ These Variations have been arranged as a piano duet by Theodor Kirchner. Also as a duet for two pianos by Paul Klengel.

# OP. 35, NO. 1. STUDIES. VARIATIONS ON A THEME BY PAGANINI.


(For Pianoforte Solo.)



## BOOK 1. THEME AND FOURTEEN VARIATIONS.

458. *Key, time and extent.*—The whole book is in A minor except Variations 11 and 12, which are in A major. The theme and Variations 1, 2 and 5, as well as from Variation 9 to the end are in  $\frac{2}{4}$  time. Variations 3, 6, 7, 8 are in  $\frac{6}{8}$ ; and Variation 4 is in  $\frac{1}{16}$ . The theme is indicated as “non troppo presto”; the only other indications in words being “Andante” for No. 11 and “Allegro” for No. 14, the finale. The other variations either repeat the movement of the preceding literally; or, retain the same pulsation\* in another note-value. The pulsations in  $\frac{6}{8}$  being the same as in  $\frac{2}{4}$ , it may be said that Variations 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10 are at the same speed as the theme. For Variations 4 and 9 the note-value is doubled; whilst No. 11 is a new departure from “Andante,” the same pulsation being retained for the two following variations, but the note value halved for No. 13. The finale towards conclusion changes from allegro to “presto ma non troppo.” Allowing for repeats the theme and all the variations except the finale are of 24-bar length. The finale has 83 bars; commencing with a 24-bar Variation and branching off to Coda.

459. *Thematic material.*—The theme is taken from  
24 Capricci per violino solo, composti e dedicati agli artisti da  
NICOLÒ PAGANINI, Op. 10,  
a work which, from time to time, has exercised a singular fas-

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\* The German locution for this is “wie vorher”: as at Variation 9 in this case, marked “wie vorher die .

 The expression is cumbersome but clear: whereas  =  sometimes leaves it doubtful which way the equivalent is to be applied.

cination upon composers. Liszt, for example, transcribed twelve of the pieces which it contains, apparently for bravura display; whilst Schumann did the same with six, but with a more poetic intention.

460. The characteristic of the present theme, considered as for variation purposes, is similar to that of Op. 24; as it entirely consists of the persistency of a subordinate rhythmical figure. This is marked by an overhead bracket in the following example.



461. *Description*.—Variation 1. It may be as well at once to admit in starting to review these variations, that small hands stand no chance with them whatever. Unless, for example, the double notes of this variation can be “positioned”—that is to say unless the hand can be adroitly made to take them in various groupings, according to the amount capable of being covered at one time, it is useless to think of ever arriving at a due execution. The right is a continuous flow of semiquavers, almost exclusively in sixths; the left being mostly in thirds, with here and there a simultaneous sostenuto.

462. Huneker considers this variation a “subtle compliment to Schumann’s toccata.”

463. Variation 2. It is not usual to describe these variations as “simplified”; but here is an obvious instance where the rhythm of the right hand part has been adjusted, and points of repose provided in order to favour exclusive attention being given to the left. The same solicitude is apparent in the occasional single notes of the right hand part, instead of the octaves which really form the design. It may be true that the variation is difficult enough as it is; but the difficulty is far from being ruthlessly imposed; all care being taken to render the design as practical as possible. In substance, the variation is an inversion of the preceding.

“Very trying for players with short-breathed fingers,” is Huneker’s remark upon this variation.



464. Variation 3. The point in this variation is the pertinacity of the sforzando reiterations. The emphasis is only *visibly* indicated when falling upon single notes, but, in reality, it is to be observed throughout the variation; the reason for the partial absence of indication being that reliance is placed upon the dispersed octave for natural production of the amount of accent required.

465. A judicious phrasing will not only render this variation more intelligible but considerably easier; and the student is also recommended to take note of it as an instance of the exceptional application of the effect of "ostinato" to an upper part.

466. Huneker considers this variation to consist of "rolling rhythms that excite more than they lull."

467. Variation 4. Difficult as is this variation technically the plan upon which it is designed is simplicity itself. Much will depend upon this being mature in the student's mind before he begins to play. The sforzando notes occupy the same position artistically as in the previous variation and are produced by rapid dispersion of the chords; thus giving an impetus to the shake at the same time. The lightness of the arpeggio figure depends upon facility in change of hand position; and this, in turn, depends upon fingering. It is impossible, however, to prescribe for the latter, in consequence of its varying with different hands. Variations 3 and 4 are of like structure.

468. Huneker pleads that this variation "asks too much of mortal man with a top trill on a chord and the left hand gambolling over the impossible."

469. Variation 5. This is in cross rhythm of six quavers against four, for right and left hands respectively. The mere co-relation of such groups is a question with which the student should already be familiar before attempting these variations, but assuming that there is no difficulty beyond that of rapid change of hand position. A *précis* should be made showing the rising chromatic progression of the bass in the first, and the chromatic widening from octave to tenth in the second section. By this means, even before memorising, the act of reading from the copy can be dispensed with, the interest increased and the difficulty diminished. This advice applies to nearly all the variations.

470. Variation 6. Like each two succeeding variations hitherto, Nos. 5 and 6 are of similar character, though not, in this instance, of construction. It is still six against four; and the "six" is still in the bass, but the "four" is evolved from a quaver rest and subsequent crotchet syncopations in the right hand. The result is a practical  $\frac{3}{4}$  (instead of  $\frac{2}{4}$ ) against  $\frac{6}{8}$ , and the arrangement extremely artful; for the  $\frac{6}{8}$  bass contributes the *first* note of the  $\frac{3}{4}$  bar and the latter contributes the *last* of the  $\frac{6}{8}$  bar. The adjustment of  $\frac{3}{4}$  against  $\frac{6}{8}$  is common enough; but that of  $\frac{6}{8}$  against a  $\frac{3}{4}$  in continual syncopation is exceptional.

471. Variation 7. The difficulty of this variation may easily be located. It lies between the first and second quaver of each bar, and towards conclusion, also between the fourth and fifth, these being the moments for rapid change in hand position. As all the rest offers no difficulty whatever it is well to practise these changes separately, and in doing so to remember that the difficulty is two-fold—consisting only partly of the change itself, the rest being due to the suddenness with which it occurs. The knowledge of this fact may possibly (and with advantage) induce the student to adopt during practice the slightest conceivable shade of *ritenuto* just before the change and then to make the latter very rapidly, so that all "break" may be entirely cancelled.

472. Variation 8. The principle upon which this variation is constructed is precisely the same as that of No. 7; the difference in execution being simply that instead of the changes in hand position occurring only once, they occur twice in every bar. At first sight this naturally appears to require a more frequent use of the same procedure, but in practice the treatment is very different. This arises from the fact that the half bar does not last sufficiently long to allow the tight wrist to come into operation at all. In the former variation the wrist was loosened for each change, but in this in consequence of the frequency with which the changes in hand position occur, it will be necessary to keep it loose all the time. When once this habit is acquired the whole difficulty of the variation vanishes; and it may thenceforward be played with almost the same facility as if written in single notes.

473. Variation 9. In this variation it is obvious that whichever hand is playing the accompanying (stationary or only slightly moving) part, must adopt a lighter touch than the

other, and thus favour the expression and rhythmical adjustment at the same time. As a certain amount of physical endurance is required it is well to see how this can be relieved without infringement upon the composer's idea. It was customary with Brahms to use the *term* *sostenuto* as implying a slight shade of *ritenuto*; and hence we may fairly deduce from the *fact* of *sostenuto*, something of the same intention. The syncopated quaver which occurs at the second and fourth bars in the upper part offers examples of this feature, and it is one which will be found to favour the phrasing at the same time. Moreover, the same phrasing if continued into the second section, also corresponds with the crescendo signs, thereby showing this interpretation to be in accord with the composer's wishes.

474. Variation 10. It was certainly considerate of the composer to allow this easier variation to succeed the more arduous No. 9, besides which he also gave his consent to the "Barth" selection\* in which No. 9 was succeeded by No. 6 of Book II—also an easy variation. In this No. 10 we have the "Syncopen-Komponist" in full swing, but the humorists who used formerly to air their wit at Brahms' expense on this subject, have long since subsided, their only real wit consisting in quietly allowing the reproach to be forgotten. Anyone failing to perceive the beauty of the slight trembling effect produced by the continuous syncopations of this *sotto voce* and as it were, "confidential" variation, would not deserve to be accounted a musician at all. It is so little to *play* that no hints can be requisite as to its performance; but it was a masterpiece to *compose*, on account of its perfect evolution of the theme without quotation of a single note of it.

475. Variation 11. This variation is no less than a chaconne of eight settings, the theme occupying two bars, and the settings, notwithstanding fidelity to their own immediate subject, gradually evolving the spirit of Paganini's melody. To add to the marvel of this performance the same position for the hands has been practically retained throughout, so that Brahms having performed one of the most wonderful feats by force of his introspective faculty, presents the result to us in such simple dress that unless we take sufficient thought of the

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\* See Notes at conclusion of Book II.

matter, we are apt to be misled into thinking it to have been quite an easy task.

476. "A veritable toccata," says Huneker of this variation, which is the same idea, though limited in its application to the mere continuity of the settings.

477. Variation 12. Until now, Variations 9 and 10 have been the only two in succession which did not "pair"; in accord with Brahms's well known habit of presenting two samples of the same kind of work; two serenades, two string quartets, two piano quartets, two overtures and so forth. In this variation the custom is resumed; and No. 11, having been a chaconne upon a two-bar subject we have, in the present variation, another chaconne, of which the subject is comprised within a *single* bar. This chaconne is integrally one for the left hand with right hand accompaniment, though the fidelity of the latter to one mode of figuration really lifts it above the level of a subordinate part.

478. The principal technical difficulty lies in successfully negotiating the "cross-hand" situations. To this end the use of the thumb must be discarded in one or other hand; and it will be all the better if the player's execution enables him to discard it in both.

479. Variation 13. The technical feature of this variation is its descending octave glissando passages for the right hand. Every pianist is familiarised already with the octave glissando is *ascending*, if only through the glorious passages in the finale of Weber's "Concert-Stück." But in *descending* the technical conditions change, and that Brahms in virtue of his "special technique," must also have had a special facility in this respect, is evident from the famous passage in No. 8 of the "Hungarian Dances," with its glissando in octaves for right hand in descending and for left hand in ascending—at the same time.

480. The fact is that the method for execution of these passages is arduous of attainment, but when once acquired their treatment becomes the merest child's play. They should be played with first and fourth fingers and with a low wrist position. Of course, they may still be played with thumb and fourth fingers however, just as we may still go from London to York on foot, if we prefer that to going by rail.

This variation is "one of the most brilliant and popular of the set," in Huneker's opinion.

481. Variation 14. This variation, or more properly speaking, this finale movement consists of three additional settings. The first consists entirely of canonic imitations in demisemiquaver figuration and is followed by a short intermezzo leading most appropriately to an abrupt pause. The appropriateness of the break lies in the fact that what follows is a variation in stretto, this being also followed by an interlude, and the latter dwindling down to a shake figure between two hands similar to that of No. 24 of Mendelssohn's "Lieder." Now follows the final setting (in presto) and coda; the way for the latter having been paved by the foregoing intermezzi. The coda is so well grafted to the final setting that the precise moment of embarking upon it is not easy to determine. It is full of impetuosity and dash, with every feature of spontaneity, notwithstanding its complete adherence to the spirit of the theme, just as throughout this entire book of studies we have never for a moment escaped from Paganini in all our travels.

"Terrible, exacting and long—a piling of Pelion upon Ossa in the coda," is Huneker's view of the finale.

482. The following observations are amongst those made in introducing the work to a "Monday Popular" audience on March 1, 1880:

"Reference has already been made to the work of Schumann and Liszt upon the Paganini capriccios. But what Brahms has done is not to transcribe the violin capriccios after his own manner for the piano, he merely takes a single theme upon which he constructs a series of variations in a form the grandest models of which are the twenty-nine variations of J. S. Bach (the "Chaconne") and subsequently, the thirty-two variations of Beethoven on an original theme in C minor, and the same composer's thirty-three variations on a waltz by Diabelli. Mendelssohn aimed at something of the same kind in his "Seventeen Variations Sérieuses" (also on an original theme), and perhaps the Brahms work, although developed at considerably greater length, has more akin to the spirit of these than to that of any of the others. At all events it is a production of eminent originality, which might have been dedicated "agli artisti" with no less propriety than the capricci of Paganini themselves, and for a similar reason—their many and varied technical difficulties, exacting from the performer

rare fluency, combined with an almost unlimited grasp of the keyboard."

483. The following observations upon the work are from Huneker:

"These diabolical variations, the last word in the technical literature of the piano are also vast spiritual problems. To play them requires fingers of steel, a heart of burning lava and the courage of a lion . . . . Take up the Chopin preludes: the last one—a separate one, Op. 45—is in the key of C sharp minor, in the middle of the thirteenth bar of which you are landed in the middle of Brahms. I do not mean to say that Brahms copied Chopin, but the mood and its physical presentation are identical with some of the music of the later Brahms. And the ten bars that follow do not sound like Chopin, but Brahms—oh so Brahmsian, that bitter-sweet lingering, that spiritual reverie in which the musical idea is gently propelled as if in some elusive dream. Then there are the extended chords, the shifting harmonic hues, the very bars are built up like Brahms . . . . I fancied that Bach anticipated everyone in modern music, but Chopin anticipating Brahms is almost in the nature of a delicate ironical jest. There is nothing new under the sun, said some venerable polyphonic pundit, in omphalic contemplation on the banks of the Ganges, and music amply illustrates this old saying."

★★ For general notices see end of Book 2.

OP. 35, NO. 2. STUDIES. VARIATIONS ON  
A THEME BY PAGANINI.

(For Pianoforte Solo.)

BOOK 2. THEME AND FOURTEEN VARIATIONS.

484. *Key, time and extent.*—The theme and Variations 1 to 3, 5 to 11 and 13 and finale are in A minor; Nos. 4 and 12 being in A major and F respectively. The original  $\frac{2}{4}$  time is kept for Variations 1 to 3, 7 to 9, and Variations 11 and 13; but it should be added that, for Variation 2, the left hand is in  $\frac{6}{8}$  time; and that Variation 7 is a compound of  $\frac{2}{4}$  and  $\frac{3}{8}$  between the two hands—right and left alternating with left and right. Variations 4 to 6 are in  $\frac{3}{8}$ ; Nos. 10 to 12 are in  $\frac{6}{8}$ , and the finale is in  $\frac{3}{8}$ . The theme (same as in Book 1) is “non troppo presto”; and the only variations with the same pulsation are Nos. 1 and 9; in each of which the note has double time-value. Nos. 2 and 3 are “poco animato”; Nos. 4 and 5 are “poco allegretto”; Nos. 6 and 7 are “poco più vivace”; No. 8 is “allegro”; No. 10 “feroce energico”; No. 11 “vivace”; No. 12 “un poco andante”; No. 13 “un poco più andante,” and the finale “presto ma non troppo.” Allowing for repeats the theme and all the variations are of 24-bar length,\* with the exception of the finale, which has 104 bars.

485. *Thematic material.*—The theme is the same as for Book 1; to which the reader is referred for particulars.

486. *Description.*—Variation 1. This Variation is a study upon double notes; and, although most players find it difficult enough as it stands, they should not fail to note the composer's concessions to their weakness and to show themselves superior to such necessity if possible. This may be ex-

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\* For no apparent reason Variation 6 is not indicated for repetition of its first part. This would reduce the length to 20 bars.

emplified by showing the real design of the third, fourth and fifth bars, as under:—



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487. It is only by the composer's indulgence that this literal statement of his idea was not adopted; and it is simply idle to imagine that it presents anything in the least impracticable.

488. Huneker describes this variation as a "tremendous and exciting study in double notes wherein the sudden muscular contractions and expansions caused by alternations of double thirds and octaves are exhausting to anyone but a virtuoso."

489. Variation 2. This is a variation of the same kind as No. 5 of the previous set, with which it should be braced for purposes of study. The similarity however is merely technical; the character of the two pieces being otherwise not only distinct, but somewhat at variance, as the reader may perceive by making the comparison of their melodic curves. These seem to be so methodically opposed as to lead to the supposition that, in composing this one, Brahms must have had the other before him, and have purposely chosen opposite directions for the evolution of his scheme.

490. This variation has no effect unless played with animation, and with rather demonstrative crescendos and decrescendos corresponding with rise and fall of the upper part. It then becomes beautifully expressive, assuming the pianist's touch to be well graduated for the purpose.

491. Variation 3. The conception of this variation is capriciously bold; and earnest students must feel regret at Brahms' indulgence at its opening, because of the vagueness resulting from delay in unfolding the design. In the composer's mind the latter was quite obviously:—





492. Of this there cannot be the slightest doubt, as, not only the design in question permeates the entire variation otherwise, but the very same bar appears correctly later on; the fact being thus made clear that the sacrifice was made in favour of halting pianists. This exemplifies what was said in Chapter IV ("General Treatise"), § 54-9, of Brahms' extreme consideration in such respects, even when its exercise was to some extent detrimental to his own work.\*

493. Variation 4. This variation, being in the major, shows itself rather early in the set for a departure from the original key; and in the first set we had to wait till No. 11 for any such change. Nor can it be said that it adds anything to the artistic completeness of the work. It is true that its melodic curves are faithful to the original and graceful in themselves. But they are only a reproduction, with change of mode and bar-value, of those of Variation 2; the lack being therefore that there is no new design, such as we have been accustomed to in all the variations until now.

494. Variation 5. The simplicity of material in this case is a very striking feature, all the technical difficulty (which is not much) arising from changing the octave; as has already been the case in other variations. The melody consists of merely the roots of a simple harmonisation of the theme; and is therefore the plainest possible bass, made to figure as an upper part by being decked off with a triple rhythmisation.

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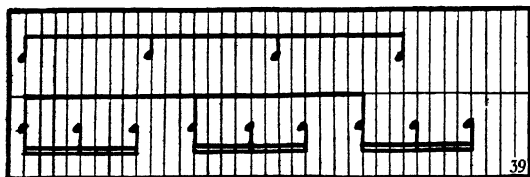
\* One cannot fail in this connection to be reminded of the following words by Sir Hubert Parry:—"It is never really worth while for a man who has anything genuine to say in the way of music to try and accommodate himself to inefficient performers. Reducing the difficulties generally reduces also the artistic completeness, and nothing is gained: for second-rate performers have not the sense to perform the works of men like Brahms or Wagner even when they are simplified, and so it is better to keep them out of their reach."

Add to this that the figuration consists of three descending grade notes, and the picture is complete. Coming from Brahms it would seem as if some joke were intended, did we not know that his standard of measurement was one which, while ignoring differences of difficulty in the direction of hardship and severity, was equally oblivious of baby-like simplicity providing only that his end was accomplished in the sense of a sufficient expression being given to his ideas. As that is undoubtedly the case here the feature is thus explained.

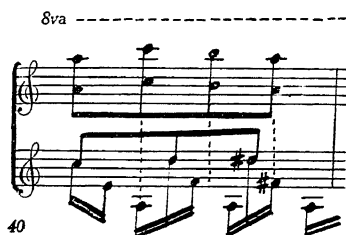
495. Variation 6. In this variation the simplicity of the last is even exceeded; and, but for the reason just given, it would become a matter of surprise that two renderings of the theme by such elementary means could possibly find their way into a collection of studies so renowned—not for artistic excellence alone, but for an excessive technical difficulty. In this variation there seems to have been some idea of reproducing the peculiar effect of the violin *left hand pizzicato*. At all events, such appears to be the most natural signification to attach to the appoggiaturas which here form the left hand's sole occupation. The care required in transferring these from octave to octave appears to be the only safeguard against playing this variation too quickly; for this, coupled with the desirability of playing them with extreme lightness, is the only feature possessing any technical difficulty whatever.

496. It is noticeable that, as published, the first section of this variation is not marked to be repeated, and that consequently only 4 bars represent 8 of the other settings. It seems doubtful whether this omission can have proceeded from the composer, seeing that it disturbs the fidelity to the theme which is elsewhere so carefully preserved.

497. Variation 7. This variation presents us with a new kind of cross rhythmical relation—that of 4 against 9, or, more properly, of 4 against  $3 \times 3$ . If these were to be mathematically adjusted, the bar would require no less than 36 divisions thus:—

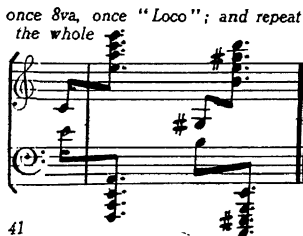


498. An observation of this diagram will prove that the  $\frac{1}{36}$  fraction is only twice involved; viz., just before the second and just after the fourth of the four quavers in the upper part. It is better therefore in practice to ignore this fraction and to proceed thus:—



afterwards adopting Franklin Taylor's advice to "practise each hand *alternately* and at exactly *the same rate of speed*; and, when each hand has acquired a certain habit, to put them together."

499. Variation 8. In this variation the intention of reproducing the string pizzicato is evidenced by an indication to that effect. An excessively light touch is therefore required; and in order to avoid reference to the copy a précis of the variation should be at once made (as already advised in Variation 5 of the first set). When once the form of the figuration is familiar, the following, for instance, is quite sufficient précis for the entire first section; and, by means of its use, the changes in position, which form by far the greatest difficulty, should cause no trouble.



500. The difficulty is to secure the commencing notes of each position, as well as the relative situations of the positions as they follow one another; and this the above example completely ensures, without either reference to the copy, or memorising. As to the latter, it need not constitute a separate operation at all; as it results automatically from the use of this method.

501. Variation 9. This variation presents another example of technical difficulty resulting only from frequent change of octave for the same material. The outline of this number, for example, is of a simplicity scarcely possible to be exceeded; yet its execution gives considerable trouble to most players. This entirely arises from their not availing themselves of "hand progression" as a means of changing position—by which is meant a continuous movement of the hand in the desired direction without waiting for the notes covered in any fixed position to be exhausted. Thus, to take the fourth bar of this variation in illustration there is no comparison between the difficulty presented by its performance in four positions as at (a) and the facility of its performance with continuous "hand-progression" as at (b):—



502. Variation 10. The expression of this variation is extremely bold, by reason of its melody continually alighting upon an "under changing-note" and persisting in its continuance during a rapid flight of arpeggio. Moreover, the latter, instead of being that of the chord to which it really relates, is so far modified through having to correspond with the changing note that it appears to represent another harmony. It is a highly original conception and its virility—not to say ferocity—of effect is still further increased by the monotonous

character of the setting, both hands playing precisely alike all the way through, the melody being in octaves for each hand whilst the arpeggios appear at two octaves apart. The flights of the latter invariably comprise two octaves and require to be executed so rapidly that the method of hand progression alluded to in the last variation entirely supersedes the thumb-under movement.

Huneker considers that this variation "exhibits a skilful use of arpeggio-forms."

503. Variation 11. The material of this variation is also that of the 29th exercise (see 51 Uebungen) but, as the latter was not published until twenty-seven years later, we may fairly conclude it to have been taken from the variation; and not vice versa. In either case, however, it shows that, in Brahms' mind, these variations had a distinctly technical objective; and that they are, on that account not so fully amenable to criticism from the artistic standpoint as his other works.

504. It is a curious feature of this variation that its right and left hand parts are practically inversions of one another throughout; besides which, as science is somewhat in abeyance in these variations, even so slight a manifestation of it becomes noticeable.

505. The technical difficulty of this variation is entirely a question of method; which however is a subject not lending itself to a verbal description.

Huneker has but one word of description for this variation — "Baffling!"

506. Variation 12. This is the only variation of either book for which another tonic is adopted; all other key-changes having been restricted to the parallel major. It is also the most sentimental in character of all the variations; being ostensibly a slow movement in romantic cantabile style. It may therefore be freely listened to, and with pleasure, quite irrespective of any further reference. Yet, in spite of all that, it stands as exemplifying one of the most subtle devices ever hit upon for reproduction of the spirit of an unstated theme. The rhythm of the latter is entirely in two-bar phrases; except where, towards the end, the phrases consist only of one bar. The notation of this variation is nominally in  $\frac{6}{8}$ , but is really in alternate bars of  $\frac{6}{8}$  and  $\frac{3}{4}$ . The reader can easily judge of the mode of reproduction by comparing original phrases with their present representative bars.

Phrases of theme	2	2	:	2	2	1	1	1	1
Bars of this Variation	$\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{3}{4}$	:	$\frac{3}{8}$ $\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{6}{8}$ $\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{6}{8}$	$\frac{6}{8}$	$\frac{6}{8}$	$\frac{6}{8}$

43

Huneker gratefully acknowledges this variation as giving "a breathing spell—one of those green melodic oases in which Brahms proves to you how easy it is for a great strong soul to be gentle and tender."

507. Variation 13. The student may possibly have noticed an unobtrusive alto part at the opening of the previous variation. If so, he will probably join in the opinion that our present left hand part is practically the same thing in diminution. We have the experience of the last set for it that Brahms feels an attraction towards methods in "diminution" as he approaches the end of his work; and, knowing his conservative tendencies, it is natural to expect the same kind of thing to happen again.

508. Therefore it is that, while a descending scale in *quavers* appears in the upper part, and may be said to form the melodic subject of this variation, a descending scale in *semiquavers* fulfils precisely the same vocation in the finale next to follow.

509. Moreover, in accordance with the explanation given of the manner of the theme's reproduction in the last variation, it is quite natural to find that, as in this one a complete scale of "eight" quavers represents the thematic phrase of *two* bars, the original phrase of *one* bar will be represented by "four" descending notes. (Refer to last four bars.)

510. Variation 14. This finale is built upon the same plan as that of the last set; to which reference may therefore be made for an explanation of its leading features. There are again several settings of the theme, separated by interlude, and proceeding in diminution till the coda is reached; the same adroit grafting of the latter, leading to a bravura conclusion; and the same retention of the spirit of the theme, to the very last note.

511. It would be extremely difficult to accord any preference to either of these two sets; and special likings may always be accounted to repose rather upon differences of temperament

in the players than upon any differences of merit in the variations themselves.

512. Huneker gives us the following résumé:—"The Variations on the Paganini theme in A minor are frankly studies, but transcendental studies, only fit to be mentioned in company with Liszt's. Apparently the top-notch of virtuosity had been reached and there remained nothing for Brahms to do but let an astonishingly fantastic imagination loose and play pranks that would have caused Schumann to shout with admiration." . . . "It seems to me that these variations are the *pièce de résistance* of the Brahms piano music;—famous, awesome, o'er-toppling, huge, fantastic, gargyleon variations erected, planned and snperimposed upon a characteristic theme. Brahms and Paganini! Was ever so strange a couple in harness? Caliban and Ariel, Jove and Puck. The stolid German, the volatile Italian! Yet fantasy wins, even if brewed in a homely Teutonic kettle. Brahms has taken the little motif—a true fiddle motif—and tossed it ballwise in the air, and while it spiral spins and bathes in the blue, he cogitates and his thought is marvellously fine spun. Webs of gold and diamond spiders and the great round sun splashing about, and then deep divings into the bowels of the firmament and growlings and subterrene rumblings, and all the while the poor maigre Paganini, a mere palimpsest for the terrible old man of Hamburg, from whose pipe wreathed musical smoky metaphysics, and whose eyes are fixed on the Kantean categories."

513. It may be of interest to readers who contemplate the public performance of these variations to know that they were first played at the Monday Popular Concerts by Herr Barth, on March 1, 1880; and that, on that occasion, Brahms gave his approval to a selection being made from both books, and arranged in such sequence as to appear to produce the best effect. The selection was—Theme; Variations 1, 3, 5 and 9 from Book I; Variations 6, 8 and 12 from Book II; and Variations 10, 11, 4, 13 and 14 (finale) from Book I.

★★ It is scarcely necessary to observe that there are no arrangements of these Variations.

## OP. 39. WALZER.

(For Pianoforte Duet; also for Pianoforte Solo by the  
Composer.)

Dedicated to Dr. Edward Hanslick.

### SIXTEEN VALSES.

514. *Key, time and extent.*—The keys are:—Nos. 1 and 13 in B; Nos. 2, 5 and 12 in E; Nos. 3 and 14 in G sharp minor; No. 4 in E minor; No. 6 in C sharp; Nos. 7 and 16 in C sharp minor; No. 8 in B flat; No. 9 in D minor; No. 10 in G, and No. 11 in B minor; altogether nine keys for sixteen vales. The notation is in  $\frac{3}{4}$  throughout. The indicated movements are: No. 1, tempo giusto; No. 4, poco sostenuto; No. 6, vivace; and No. 7, poco più andante—these speeds presumably being intended to be retained until contradiction in each case. Allowing for repeats the various lengths are: Nos. 1, 2 and 9, 48 bars; Nos. 3, 10, 13 and 16, 32 bars; No. 4, 52 bars; Nos. 5 and 15 (second part of which is not repeated), 44 bars; No. 6, 69 bars; Nos. 7 and 11, 70 bars; No. 8, 60 bars; No. 12, 64 bars; and No. 14, 72 bars.

515. *Thematic material.*—These Valses though grouped under one opus number are neither a set nor in any other sense a contextual work. No doubt the succession in which the collection is arranged is one deemed by the composer to be suitable for a continuous performance, as we may perceive from the arrangement of keys. These follow with a distinct relation to the original key as far as No. 6, a similar relationship being resumed for the last six numbers also; whilst the four middle numbers (7 to 10) have a much more free—not to say erratic—key succession. Such method shows the order to have been deliberately chosen, but even this does render the collection a continuous work; and had the latter idea been in the composer's mind he would scarcely have finished in C sharp minor what had been begun in B.



516. The character of thematic material is very various; but a classification soon brings the composer's method to light. The valse-rhythm which may be described as "waving" or "wafting" was evidently one in which he took great delight; and one in which he was so eminently successful that it would not be unsafe to affirm the specimens he has left us to stand absolutely unapproached in a certain vein by those of any other composer. Of this "wafting" character in the present collection there are no less than 8 (Nos. 2, 3, 5, 9, 11, 12, 15 and 16); in other words, these constitute just half the book. Couched in the terms of what may be called a "brisk" bar-subdivision (evidently these are the numbers which set Huneker thinking of the open air) we have four: Nos. 1, 4, 13 and 14. Finally, the remaining four numbers (6, 7, 8, 10), falling approximately in the middle, and therefore practically corresponding with the erratic key-succession referred to, are also just those which present the most variety of character; being respectively brilliant, sentimental, sprightly and humorous.

517. The following example exhibits, melodically, two bars of the opening in each case:—

No. 1

The musical notation displays the first 16 bars of the 'First Valse' in a single melodic line. The notation is organized into four groups of four bars each, numbered 1 through 16. Below the staff, key signatures are indicated for every second bar (bars 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, and 16). The key sequence is: Key B (bar 2), Key E (bar 4), G# minor (bar 6), E minor (bar 8), Key E (bar 10), Key C# (bar 12), C# minor (bar 14), and Key Bb (bar 16). The notation includes various musical symbols such as treble clef, key signatures (sharps, naturals, and flats), and bar lines.

### FIRST VALSE.

518. *Description.*—Of brisk and vigorous character; with decisive phrases, and very spare amount of sostenuto.

Marked individuality of the beat, in the first section; followed by prevalence of the rhythmic wave of bar-duration in the second, form the outline.

Huneker's account of this number is: "Harmonised in the lustiest, freest fashion imaginable, it opens boldly, joyously; with the decisiveness we know so well in the preamble to Schumann's 'Carnaval.'"

## SECOND VALSE.

519. *Description*.—This Valse, which is one of extremely melodious and vocal character, is in two sections, of 8 and 16 bars; both repeated.

The richness of harmony, generally, and especially the modulations of the second section, are features of this piece.

Huneker says: "It has an entrancing lilt. The mood is nocturnal; the colour subdued; but none the less full of glancing richness."

This piece exemplifies the valse-wave in perhaps its most charming manner: where the *sostenuto* of the melody at the commencement of each bar is adroitly helped by quaver motion in a subordinate part.

## THIRD VALSE.

520. *Description*.—"A tiny gem," says Huneker, "in the warm and neglected key of G sharp minor; and with the pulse-beat of Chopin."

This highly original and graceful valse is in two sections of eight bars—each repeated. Although here classed with the valse of "waving" rhythm, this number has a certain individuality in respect of that feature. The wave, for example, may be sometimes of a *progressive*, and at other times of a merely *swaying* motion; that of the present valse being of the latter description. The reader's ideas upon the subject may easily be enlivened by comparing this with the previous valse; as, in the latter, the waving motion has the effect of appearing to be steadily forward.

## FOURTH VALSE.

521. *Description*.—Of open-air character; built in two repeated sections of 8 and 18 bars, the latter of these being extended by two bars in favour of a fine harmonic progression, which interrupts the cadence to that extent. The style is “*appassionato*”; with a glorious crescendo in the middle of the second section, culminating when the original theme is regained.

This valse leads off dashing; and, by this means, attains to an important climax within diminutive bounds.

Huneker observes of it that it is Hungarian in character; and adds that “the brace of harmonic progressions at the close is worth living for.”

## FIFTH VALSE.

522. *Description*.—Of “waving” rhythm, this valse is in two repeated sections of 8 and 14 bars; the latter being rhythmised as 4 + 10. It is almost church-like in character; with frequent suspensions, and an organ-point of eight bars. The melody is mostly in the alto; with accompanying parts, both above and below.

Of this valse Huneker says: “If there could be such a thing as a sacred Valse, this is sacred. You can sense the valse; but the theme is serious to gravity, just as a Chopin Scherzo is a tragic poem. One feels like echoing Robert Schumann’s—

“How is gravity to clothe itself if jest goes about in such dark veils?”

## SIXTH VALSE.

523. *Description*.—A highly brilliant valse; in two repeated sections of 8 and 26 bars. The second section is rhythmised as 12 + 14, this apparently capricious phrasing being due to the fantastic character of an incessantly moving upper part. Though splendidly effective when well played, this valse is probably an especial sinner in the estimation of

those who have not learned to discard the use of the thumb at will; besides which, matters are not improved by its being in an extreme key.

Huneker finds in this valse a touch of the fantastic element, similar to that to be perceived in a certain selection of the variations.

### SEVENTH VALSE.

524. *Description*.—As a sentimental piece, the “poco più andante” of this valse is welcome after the brilliancy of the previous number; but the contrast between the two is by no means limited to this difference of feature. In the last valse the individuality of the beat was prominent; but now this is no longer so. Yet we do not revert to the mere “bar-wave,” pure and simple; but have a new rhythm; of which a leading trait is, added emphasis to the second beat of every alternate bar.

Huneker finds this valse: “Full of harmonic variety.”

### EIGHTH VALSE.

525. *Description*.—Sprightly, dainty, piquant—altogether a delicate specimen of the form, this number consists of two repeated sections of 12 and 18 bars. The expression is *sotto voce* and the rapid changes in position required from the left hand afford several illustrations of the peculiar claims of the Brahms technique.

The whole of these valse is remarkable for the fidelity of the several numbers to a set bar-subdivision; and, in well-nigh every case, the feature is to be esteemed. But in this number the incessant



becomes tiresome before we have proceeded very far and spoils the general effect.

Huneker calls this valse “a proof positive of Brahms’ geniality”; and adds that—“in a small piano piece by the Russian composer Liadov, the same melodic and rhythmic idea is utilised; even to the pretty modulation.” (It would be hard, how-

ever, to tell, within a thousand, in how many other pieces the same modulation has been utilised.)

### NINTH VALSE.

526. *Description.*—Of “waving” rhythm, and resignedly melancholy and despondent in character, it seems likely enough that this valse is a reminiscence; and one in which it was natural for the composer’s affection for the Schumanns to lead him to indulge.

At the same time there is nothing to render one piece suggestive of the other beyond the mere figure; and, even that in Schumann’s work is frequently modified, instead of being constant, as it is in Brahms.

But Huneker is very decided: “Here Brahms pilfers boldly from Schumann. The ‘Davidsbündler,’ No. 18, certainly prompted him; but with what ease and variety has he not handled the other man’s theme! It is like a sigh, an unshed tear, and is more Brahms than it is Schumann.” (The last remark may certainly be confirmed.)

### TENTH VALSE.

527. *Description.*—Humorous for Brahms, this little number consists of two repeated sections of 8 bars only. It is therefore one of the shortest; seeming almost like an interlude when the valse is being played continuously.

It is the only valse of even slightly scherzo character; and even this is rather the scherzo of the philosopher at play than that of the giddy or light-hearted. Short as it is, Brahms has still found room for certain samples of his method. Thus, the melodic use of under-changing notes begins at bar 6; but it is not till the eighth bar that its object appears—that of providing a neutral combination wherewith either to return, or to pass on to the chord of B for the next section. The return to the key, by taking the same two bars, first in major and then in minor, is also characteristic.

### ELEVENTH VALSE.

528. *Description.*—Of “waving” rhythm, this more important number consists of repeated sections of 16 and 24 bars.

The demarcation of the phrase is here very pointed; the rhythmic waves of 4, 2 and 1 bar respectively imparting to the whole a typical Viennese character. In short, for pure "valse-spirit" (though not necessarily for general merit) this valse stands ahead of most of the others; this quality arising from the fact that its harmonic progressions contribute more to the rhythmic flow than is perceivable in the other numbers.

The second section again begins with two bars, first in minor and then in major. There is also an exquisite harmonic progression, leading to the return of the theme in the second section.

Huneker remarks that, from its style, this valse might easily have been written by Schubert.

## TWELFTH VALSE.

529. *Description.*—Of "waving" rhythm. This valse has a peculiar *cachet*, on account of its wave almost invariably consisting of a crotchet on either side of the bar-line; and the student will do well to compare its effect with that of No. 9, in which the same figure was prevalent and to observe how differently the same rhythmic design may be made to appear.

Another useful comparison, from the student's point of view, is the rhythmic demarcations of this valse with those of No. 11; and especially during the second section, where, in both cases, the harmonic progressions powerfully contribute to the phrasing, and impart the peculiar Viennese swing which, in spite of the beauty of other varieties, is the ideal valse rhythm.

The opening of the second section of this valse is also remarkable for a very charming modulation.

## THIRTEENTH VALSE.

530. *Description.*—Of open-air character; and altogether a composition to admit which as a Valse is almost equivalent to denying that No. 5 can be one also. Brahms evidently regarded the valse form as one of unusual receptiveness, and as embracing all rhythms possible to the  $\frac{3}{4}$  time bar, excepting only those proper to other dance-forms. In his ambition to

include so much he has sometimes run counter to these forms; with the result of causing his valse to partake of their character.

#### FOURTEENTH VALSE.

531. *Description*.—Of open-air character. This valse has two repeated sections of 12 and 24 bars-length respectively. In rhythm it somewhat resembles the mazurka, on account of its prominent second beat; but this impression is partly cancelled by the steady continuance of a pizzicato-like quaver bass. The phrasing, in its expression, and especially at the cadences, shows also an inclination to depart from the valse character; a slight rallentando being sometimes necessary to round off the progressions with sympathetic effect. The first section contains an exceptionally interesting transient modulation.

#### FIFTEENTH VALSE.

532. *Description*.—Of “waving” rhythm. There is something of the Tyrolese Volkslied character about this valse, which Brahms seems to have found inspiring; as he has continued the second section beyond the usual limits. It contains, however, very little new material; and we have not very long to wait before reappearance of the “jodel” effect; after which the latter is continuously dwelt upon either in literal or elaborated form. This is one of the few numbers which will not bear repeated performance; the same kind of bar-subdivision being so long maintained.

Huneker considers that “this valse has the true tang of Brahms, the amiability, the large sweet nature, the touch of life that we call universal when we find it in Shakespeare.”

#### SIXTEENTH VALSE.

533. *Description*.—“Waving” rhythm. Two sections of 16 and 8; only the last being repeated. The first section is also, in reality, one of 8 bars repeated; the second 8 bars utilising the original theme as counterpoint to a new melody, or,

rather, to an adjustment as upper part, of the melody which was previously in the alto.

The fact of this valse having a feminine ending is a reason, in addition to those already given, for not accepting it as intended in the light of a conclusion to the entire work.

## NOTES ON THE VALSES.

534. This work was first published in 1867, and soon proved to be more productive of a favourable feeling towards Brahms than his more serious and ambitious compositions; even critics who had hitherto never been able to find a good word to say for him suddenly discovering some ground for praise. It is not for us to question the sincerity of this change of attitude; but it would be unwise to leave out of account the distinction to be drawn between praise of a light work and that of others of more weighty import, as well as the possibility of an unfriendliness really underlying this new kind of greeting; though, if such writers (as is not improbable) regarded the appearance of these valse as an indication that Brahms contemplated forsaking his higher ambitions, they were destined to find themselves seriously mistaken. There were others, however, who, even in presence of a greater range of Brahms' productions, evinced a distinct leaning to the Valse; as, for example, Ehlert, who, as late as June, 1880, was writing adversely about Brahms, generally, in Rodenberg's "*Deutscher Rundschau*"; notwithstanding that he was one of those who, in respect of these Valse, could express himself with considerable warmth. These are his words:—"Having in time assumed an ordinary and most material character, dance music has been led back to the domain of high art by Schubert and Chopin. Dancing may be accomplished in many ways: passionately, indifferently, distractedly or symbolically. The symbolic dancer will introduce in his motions the poetic idea underlying the dance; that is, the fleeting, half-confidential, and yet not binding, contact of one person with another of the opposite sex, a sort of rhythmic dialogue without words. And Brahms possessed the gift of substantiating his mastery in this field by the charm of half-revealed sentiment, by the modest denial of the scarcely-uttered confession and by his power of rendering the wildest yearnings speechless with confusion.



"At times, it is true, he handles his subject in a more decided manner, but the most beautiful among his waltzes are those whose cheeks are tinged with blushes. Brahms carried the freshness of youth into his later years, and blushes are peculiarly becoming to him. His sweetest melodies are merely tinted with a rosy hue; they do not possess the deep summery complexion of Schubert's. The small opus has become the ancestor of a small literature, and many of our contemporary musicians have walked in the way of the Brahms waltzes."

\*\* In addition to the original for four hands, and to the composer's solo arrangement, there is an easy solo arrangement by the composer; and another of moderate difficulty by J. Carl Eschmann. Five of the Valses were also arranged by Brahms for two pianos. Other arrangements are piano duet and violin, by F. Hermann; piano duet with violin and 'cello, by the same; and for string quartet with *ad lib.* double-bass, by Ferdinand Thieriot. The latter is available in both score and parts.

## OP. 76. EIGHT CLAVIERSTÜCKE.

("PIANOFORTE PIECES.")

NOS. 1, 2, 5 AND 8 ENTITLED "CAPRICCIO."

NOS. 3, 4, 6 AND 7 ENTITLED "INTERMEZZO."

### NO. I. CAPRICCIO.

535. *Key, time and extent.*—In F sharp minor (finishing major); "un poco agitato" (unruhig bewegt); time,  $\frac{6}{8}$ ; 85 bars.

536. *Thematic material.*—We now enter upon what has been called the "contemplative" period of the Brahms piano-forte works; which is not only distinguished from the remainder in the manner described in the didactic chapters, but also by consisting entirely of *single-movement* pieces, exception being of course made of the Second Concerto, Op. 83. The result is that thematic material in the individual case is always slight; often, indeed, consisting of a single subject with episodial contrasts. In the present instance, for example, there is but one theme as under:—



537. *Melody.*—The above example comprises all that there is of melody in the conventional sense; though the slight material is considerably amplified by sequence, by inversion, by augmentation and by dialogue between the extreme parts. The first four notes of the above form the burden of the piece; and are so completely interwoven with it in spirit that, with

the thoroughness which characterises this master, he is satisfied with existence of this trait, without troubling to make it manifest. While we cannot help admiration of such sterling work it also gives occasion for our regret that so few students should be found to probe sufficiently deep to discover these latent beauties. In order to encourage painstaking in this direction the following material, as really existing, of the cadence of this piece (last six bars) is offered:—



By the light of this example the reader will perceive that there is a danger of this parting murmur of the theme being lost unless the player is aware of the basis underlying the passage.

538. *Harmony*.—The harmony is sad, as of course it is intended to be; and possibly this feature, coupled with the smallness of melodic material, may militate against the popularity of the piece. It will always be dear to good players, however; as may be gathered from Elizabeth von Herzogenberg's remark upon it—"My favourite is, and will remain the F sharp minor Capriccio."\*

539. *Rhythm*.—The rhythm is duple throughout and so simple generally as to form the only element, with that also of "form," respecting which no remark is necessary.

540. *Figuration*.—The figuration, which is rather extensive, consists of plain descending arpeggios divided between the two hands, during the Cantabile; but that of the introduction is differently designed, and contains irregularities which render it difficult of execution. The cessation of figuration at bar 64 requires artistic management in performance.

541. *Form*.—Simple lyric.

542. *General characteristics*.—The solidity of this piece, its earnestness, and its technical difficulty, combine to render it one for accomplished players only. Huneker considers that

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\* Letter to Brahms, December 13, 1878.

the opening of it suggests Schumann; and that its principal melody is in the style of Mendelssohn; though structurally only, as its harmonisation and development are too bristling and forbidding to answer that description. He also mentions the treatment of the theme by inversion on return; but simply labels this a characteristic "trick" of Brahms. He describes the mood-colour as gloomy, even to despair; and adds that, although the piece ends in the major it is without a ray of sunshine.

## NO. 2. CAPRICCIO.

543. *Key, time and extent.*—In B minor; Allegretto non troppo (middle section "più tranquillo"); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 131 bars.

544. *Thematic material.*—This consists of three subjects; in B, D and C respectively. The latter, although of cantabile character, forms no interruption of the vivacious movement; in consequence of being accompanied by an unceasing flow of semiquavers, resembling in outline the opening theme. The pointed distinction between the three subjects in respect of bar-subdivision gives a rhythmical individuality to each; as will be seen in the following:—



545. *Melody.*—If Brahms had had the intention of ranging in close succession two pieces of the utmost dissimilarity he could scarcely have done better than place this next to No. 1; for, if the latter might feebly be held deficient in melodic material, this, on the other hand, is brimful of tune.

546. *Harmony.*—The feature in respect of harmony is that it is very exceptional to find such abstruse progressions handled in such a light way. The piece is so rich in instances of this that many examples might be adduced; but three will probably suffice for mention—viz., the progression commencing

at bar 42, that commencing at bar 70, and the manipulation of the tenor part during the last 8 bars.

547. *Rhythm*.—To listen to this piece one might readily suppose its entire rhythm to be in short duple phrases, as well as arranged in the duple sense, to form a whole. That impression, however, arises from the beguiling character of the melodic successions; for, in reality, it is not well founded. Over and over again the 8-bar period is extended by 4 bars, whereby the broad bearings of the sentence become triple. The result is, naturally, a weakening of the duple sense; under cover of which the composer, equally unobserved, extends his phrase to 5 bars whenever he chooses. Thus 5-bar phrases occur at bars 41, 74 and 115, and on each of these occasions instead of disturbing the rhythm add to the grace of its flow.

548. *Figuration*.—The figuration is largely borrowed from the first subject, an observation of which, as given in the example, will enable a very good idea to be formed of the whole. So far as the figure there shown is departed from it is only in the direction of plain arpeggio.

549. *Form*.—The first and second subjects are shown separately in the example, for the purpose of exhibiting to the reader the full thematic material. In reality, however, these two subjects are one; and this, being subject only to the inter-spersion of a cantabile as “Mittelsatz,” renders the number a lyric piece of the simplest kind, as to form.

550. *General characteristics*.—The popularity of this piece is well assured for all time, its characteristics being of the happy kind which are acceptable to all. For the general listener there is abundance of melody and clearness of outline, for the musician there is adroit modulation, skilful manipulation of parts and contrast of subjects, and for the technical student there are all the advantages, in addition, of a splendid staccato study. The general trend is an even cheerfulness; and therefore no intensity of emotion is here to be found comparable, for example, with that of No. 1. All is life, from end to end; even the semiquaver motion being but sparsely interrupted, in favour of the rhythm of the themes, as shown in the example.

551. The use of this piece as a study is one which the reader will do well not to overlook; and it is recommended on the ground that, the more musical interest a study contains, the more it can be practised without fatigue. There is a passage in one of Elizabeth von Herzogenberg's letters which reads as

if she used it in this way, where she says:—"Das eine in h moll das ich zurückbehielt weil ich grade so seelenvergnügt daran übte."<sup>\*</sup>

Fuller-Maitland considers this piece "as purely piano-music as anything of Chopin's."

### NO. 3. INTERMEZZO.

552. *Key, time and extent.*—In A flat; Grazioso (anmuthig, ausdrucksvoll); time, common (changing to  $\frac{3}{2}$  for 4 bars at conclusion); 30 bars.

553. *Thematic material.*—Notwithstanding the shortness of this piece there are two subjects, twice following one another, and thus constituting a movement devoid of all development. This Intermezzo may well be described as a model, for Brahms himself never wrote another to equal it. The contrast between the subjects is so perfect that no transition group is needed to pass to the second, or anything episodial required before the return. Everything seems to be in miniature; for, as both subjects are repeated, the material of the piece consists of only 15 bars. The following are the openings of the subjects:—



554. *Melody.*—Should any reader of these pages desire to select a piece expressly to exemplify Brahms in the character of melodist this is the one upon which his choice should fall. Elsewhere we may find abundance of beautiful melody, but the world contains very few of that perfect type which seems to make us reverent in their presence. It was natural that Brahms, so fond of the Volkslied, should, by means of his consummate art, be able to give us back the best features of popular song,

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\* "The one in B minor that I kept back, because I was practising it with such soul's delight."

and with such an infusion of artistic refinement as to form the ideal of tonal expression. Yet it was not given, even to him, to produce many samples of this perfect kind—for perfect it is in the strictest sense.

555. *Harmony*.—It may be inferred from the above that the harmony abounds with interest; for no melody of such refinement ever existed without its perfection depending to some degree upon contributive effects. The high pedal bass upon which the chords are reared during three bars at the beginning (and several times elsewhere) is a novelty, as organ point is traditionally quite a different thing; and some of the exceptional effect may thus be due to our encountering effects in an upper octave which we are accustomed to associate with the bass. Other points are the contrast of keys in approaching the refrain (bars 10 and 25) and the masterly prolongation of cadence.

556. *Rhythm*.—An examination of this also helps to unravel the mystery of effect. The phrases are all composed of 5 bars, each of these being subdivided as 3 + 2. There is however one very remarkable exception; and that is, the phrase preceding the refrain in each case (bars 6-10; 21-25) and which is composed of 4 + 1.

557. *Figuration*.—It would be an abuse of the word figuration to apply it to the faintly touched harp notes of the left hand part during the first subject, as each note is entirely essential. It is more instructive to regard this working as an illustration of the infusion of so much meaning into a figure that it ceases to be subordinate.

558. *Form*.—It would seem superfluous to speak of the form of a piece couched within 30 bars of which 15 are practically a repetition, but for the fact that there are two subjects the second of which is a refrain and the form consequently lyric.

559. *General characteristics*.—This piece seems too ethereal for description in the terms of everyday employment, but to insist on classification would be to range it as a nocturne. Notwithstanding its shortness it is divided into two portions which are practically a repeat of one another. But the repetition only seems to respond to the listener's longing to hear the lovely strain again, and in doing so to make it even more charming than before.

Fuller-Maitland (in Grove) says that this piece "depends for its special charm upon the transient quality of the piano-

forte tone, and technically, upon a very judicious use of the pedal."

Huneker thus refers to this number:—"This Intermezzo occasionally strays in an uneasy fashion on to the concert stage; a few pianists playing this tender wreath of moonbeams and love, but either too slow or too fast. It exhales an odour of purity, of peace, that is not quite untroubled, and nothing sweeter can be imagined than the dolce (bar 13) that follows a ritenuto and introduces a break in the melody. Though consisting of only two pages, they are those of a masterpiece. They give us Brahms at his best and in his most lovable mood."

#### NO. 4. INTERMEZZO.

560. *Key, time and extent.*—In B flat; Allegretto grazioso: time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 56 bars.

561. *Thematic material.*—To this piece there is but one subject which can be properly so called, but it passes off into a troubled refrain of such character that for purposes of elucidation it is better to consider the latter separately. The commencement of each is here shown:—



562. *Melody.*—The character of this melody lies in its passing from a fairly cheerful theme to a refrain of gloomy expression. It is so usual for lyrics to become emotional during the stanza, and to turn to the refrain for relief, that a piece in which the contrary occurs at once acquires an individuality.

563. *Harmony.*—A highly remarkable feature is that the discontent of the refrain is expressed by delaying the resolution of its discord; and, even at last, resolving it upon the thesis of the bar—as if unwillingly. Another feature is that, even when resolved, it still exhibits unrest; and, passing on to a series of modulations from which the return of the theme is evolved, it works round to the same concluding chord (E flat



minor) as if beset by some trouble which could not be forgotten. These are delicate manipulations of harmony showing the master-touch.

564. *Rhythm*.—It has been well said that Brahms was Brahms' greatest critic; and we, who patiently unravel his work with the continual result of finding unexpected beauties, know that this epigram reposes upon hard fact. A simple lyric of the present description is not the kind of piece in which we should be inclined to look for any peculiar exemplification of symmetry, for its proportions are so slender that we might fairly suppose coherence to be assured without any special solicitude in its regard. Yet this is what we find: the middle, or dividing, section (from the double bar) consists of 12 bars; all in 2-bar phrases. The opening and concluding sections are precisely alike in their construction; the only formal distinction being a slight extension of the final cadence. There is, therefore, the most perfect symmetry; besides which, the internal disposition of the first and last sections yields the same kind of result; the order of phrases being here shown:—

Stanza:—2, 4, 2, 2, 3 (final phrase merged into refrain).

Refrain:—2, 2, 1, 2.

565. *Figuration*.—The figuration of this piece is a sample of the innocent and almost child-like dress in which Brahms could begarb the intensest thought. The plainness of the figure helps to reconcile us to the troubled feelings which are being expressed; and, had the figure been a complicated one, it would have disturbed the artistic balance, and rendered the piece one of emotional exaggeration.

566. *Form*.—We are so accustomed to associate the idea of form with that of dimensions and relative proportions that it seems somewhat irregular to bespeak the use of the term in favour of re-arrangements of shapes and dispositions with which we are already familiar. Yet, although no geometrical change—so to speak—is here present, the novel treatment of the refrain is just as much a new form as would have been the most revolutionary re-arrangement of bar-numbers.

567. *General characteristics*.—In character this piece is a "Song without Words"; but Mendelssohnian only so far as consisting of melody with set figure of accompaniment. To point this fact it may be sufficient to mention that the whole song is practically set to a continuous strain of discord, with

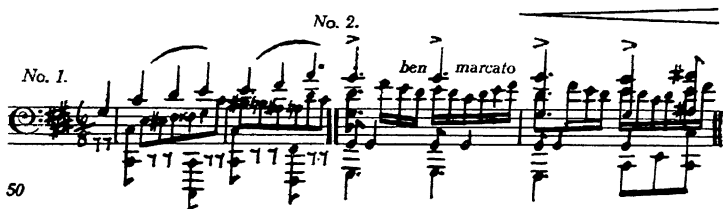
only the slightest possible relief. It is a piece in which the contrast comes not, as usually, from the use of discord; but from the rarity of concord seeming to shed a welcome ray of hope amid the gloom.

Huneker considers this piece "more shy and diffident than the other numbers, its graciousness being veiled by a hesitating reserve; which, further on, becomes almost painful. Mark where the double-notes begin,\* mark the progression and its dark downward inflection. But it is a beautiful bit of writing, with some of the characteristics of a nocturne; but full of questionings, full of enigmatic pain. Brahms, too, suffered severely from Weltschmerz."

## NO. 5. CAPRICCIO.

568. *Key, time and extent.*—In C sharp minor; Agitato ma non troppo presto (sehr aufgeregt, doch nicht zu schnell), changing to più tranquillo;  $\frac{6}{8}$  time (changing to  $\frac{2}{4}$ ); 118 bars.

569. *Thematic material.*—This number is of considerable development and importance; but, being of lyric character, the amount of thematic material is not proportionately great. There are two subjects; each of which is variously transformed in course of the piece.



570. *Melody.*—The agitated character of this number largely arises from its leading melody being really in  $\frac{3}{4}$ , although housed amid  $\frac{6}{8}$  surroundings. The whole piece seems to be a sort of warfare between the two kinds of bar-sub-division; the  $\frac{2}{4}$  portion appearing in the light of a truce between them whereby the half-bar pulsation of the  $\frac{6}{8}$ , and the

\* The passage here classified as "second subject."

crotchet beat of the  $\frac{3}{4}$  are both retained. Three times in course of the piece this contest rises to the level of anger, the last occasion being the final 7-bar Codetta. Why this Codetta is written in  $\frac{6}{8}$  time is a mystery; for it is so pointedly in  $\frac{5}{8}$  that the composer has taken his 5-quaver groups continually across the bar-line. Considered as in  $\frac{5}{8}$  it represents a drawn battle between the two pulsations, as in  $\frac{5}{8}$  we have neither the equal halves of the  $\frac{6}{8}$  nor the crotchet beats of the  $\frac{3}{4}$  bar. The player will find that to regard the composition in this light will help him considerably; as, for example, at the change to  $\frac{3}{4}$ , where he might otherwise be embarrassed as to the precise degree of motion. By following the course advised he will allow the duration of the half-bar of  $\frac{2}{4}$  to be precisely the same as that of  $\frac{6}{8}$ , and so the difficulty ends. From these remarks the reader will perceive that in this number the elements of melody and rhythm are inseparable.

571. *Harmony*.—The features already described have the effect of continually adding to the intensity of effect, as the most ordinary harmonic progression becomes passionate when appearing in the midst of a treatment of rhythmic cross relations. If to this reflection we join the fact that the progressions in this piece are by no means ordinary; that they are already passionate in themselves; and that the influence of rhythmic cross relations has to be added to a high degree of fervour already existing we shall be able to form some idea of how this piece stands as a sample of what the piano can express emotionally.

572. *Rhythm*.—The rhythmic features of detail have already been described under "Melody" (q.v.). The broader rhythmical outline presents nothing unusual except the fearfully demonstrative interruptions of phrase before each return (at bars 36 and 86) which may be described as one of the most stupendous effects in the whole range of piano literature. Brahms has presumably here intended the damper-pedal to be retained somewhat, in order to display the angry cloud of sound; the extra time being compensated for by a slight preliminary accelerando.

573. *Figuration*.—None.

574. *Form*.—Lyric.

575. *General characteristics*.—These are sufficiently evident from the foregoing; and other opinions are difficult to collect as most critics have seemed to consider this piece rather

a hard nut. Huneker, however, makes a bold venture; thus: "This capriccio represents a distinct advance in mastery of material, and in the expression and realisation of moods almost too recondite and remote, being more lengthy and ambitious than any other number of the opus. It is an agitated, passionate composition, driving through darkness and storm without relief until a silent 'poco tranquillo' is reached; but the point of repose is soon abandoned and the turmoil begins anew and the ending is full of gloom and fierceness. I catch Schumann in spots; for example, at bar 33 when a rank modulation stares you in the face, but with the eyes of Robert the Fantastic. The tempest-like character of the capriccio is marked. It is a true soul-storm in which the spirit, buffeted and drenched by the wind and wave of adversity, is almost subdued; but the harsh and haughty coda shows indomitable courage at the last. It is a powerful companion picture for Schumann's 'Aufschwung.'"

## NO. 5. INTERMEZZO.

576.—*Key, time and extent.*—In A; Andante con moto (sanft bewegt); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$  (a virtual  $\frac{6}{8}$  against  $\frac{2}{4}$ ); 92 bars.

577. *Thematic material.*—This consists of two subjects—in tonic and relative minor respectively. The feature is the peculiar form of agitato resulting from the setting of four quavers against six, and vice versa. The following example of the two subjects shows the disposition of the grouping in these respects.



578. *Melody.*—The reader will have already observed a disposition of melodic features to merge with those of rhythm. This is a trait which occurs with some frequency; and it is comparatively rare for a difficulty to be experienced in keeping melody and figuration distinctly apart. We have had how-

ever one instance in connection with the present opus (that of No. 3, q.v.) in which the figuration so contributed to the beauty of the melody as to be almost capable of being described as a part of it; and the same thing occurs in the present number, though in a lesser degree. While the *sostenuto* notes of its first subject have the air of representing a melody exclusively the figuration occupies so much attention that it is almost impossible for the listener to avoid accepting the two as one. The melody of the second subject has a "two-voiced" effect, in consequence of each separate phrase not being allowed to conclude before the next begins. This shows an affinity with the corresponding portion of Op. 118, No. 2; which is not surprising when we reflect that these two pieces have the feature in common of being throughout upon one emotional level.

579. *Harmony*.—The harmonic feature is not greatly in evidence; but a highly interesting progression is that by which the C sharp major period of the first theme merges into its return, and especially in respect of its conclusion, where G sharp dominant is, usually though rightly, deemed a fitting halt before resuming in the key of A.

580. *Rhythm*.—The first subject is rigorously confined to 8-bar sentences. The first two periods of the F sharp minor section have extensions of one bar (bars 34 and 43 forming respectively 5-bar phrases with the 4 bars by which they are preceded); but these are the only departures from an absolutely "square" rhythm, as far as outline is concerned. The real rhythmical interest lies of course in the cross relation set up between the six and four quavers as elsewhere referred to.

581. *Figuration*.—The figuration has already been alluded to, as closely allied to the "melody" (q.v.) in this case. This was in reference to the first subject only. The figuration of the second consists of a plain arpeggio accompaniment; and, as such, would scarcely require mention, but for the fact that the notes have evidently been selected in view of four out of the six quavers been heard alone, as the result of placing six against four.

582. *Form*.—Lyric, in two sections with Codetta.

583. *General characteristics*.—Although not so fully developed, the general trait of this piece is the same as that of Op. 118, No. 2 (q.v.). In other words, it consists of music which appears not to seek a climax, but to revel in serenity and

evenness of sentiment. It is the tonal expression of contentment; and of the happiness which knows nothing of exuberance of joy, for the reason that it has no experience of sorrow. The test of popular advancement in music is precisely the degree of appreciation which such works receive.

Huneker expresses himself on the subject of this piece as follows:—In it there is perfect calm, perfect repose of mind and body. In the slow moving triplets Brahms indicates those curves of quiet that enfold us when we are at one with ourselves, with nature. Even the section in F sharp minor is gracious without a hint of the tragic, and the piece ends in A major stillness.

## NO. 7. INTERMEZZO.

584. *Key, time and extent.*—In A minor; moderato semplice; time, allabreve (with occasional single bars of  $\frac{3}{2}$ ); 49 bars in notation, or 73 in performance with repeats.

585. *Thematic material.*—This intermezzo is no less than a miniature ballade,\* its first subject serving in the same capacity as that of Op. 10, No. 2—that is to say, as both prologue and epilogue. The story is all told in the fitful second subject; the developments of which however add little to the material. The two commencements are as under:—



\* Although classed in publication as "Intermezzo" it appears that Brahms himself once alluded to it as a "Romance." This was when, in sending it to Elis. v. Herzogenberg, who had repeatedly asked for it, and in allusion to her textual setting of its second subject from memory (see "General characteristics") he inscribed it as:—

"Romanze für 2 zarte Frauenstimmen & 2 zarten Frauenzimmern gewidmet."

"Romance for 2 sweet lady-voices and dedicated to 2 sweet ladies."

586. *Melody*.—The melody is of vocal character; and composite, as resulting from an imaginary two voices. The first melody is stately and sedate; being also very short (as may be supposed intentional in view of the foregoing) and used only as introduction and conclusion. The second melody is principally remarkable for the shortness of its phrases, apparently designed to leave room for an assenting second voice, and lending colour to the supposition of a "narrative" intention. Its agitation is well contrasted with the stateliness of the first theme.

587. *Harmony*.—A tinge of the archaic in the short introduction and conclusion also supports what has been said as to the meaning of the piece. During the second subject the harmonies are not only ordinary, but play very much upon the same chords. There is however an interesting progression of six bars leading up to the first  $\frac{3}{4}$ .

588. *Rhythm*.—Upon the whole, the rhythm is extremely simple; but a sudden expansion of the phrase occurs just before the change to  $\frac{3}{4}$  by which the previous pulsation is neutralised and the composer left free to resume his theme at pleasure. This is not so refined as most of Brahms' methods but it is effective, in situations where there is no objection to a "quasi cadenza" impression. Another situation of the same kind occurs at the next  $\frac{3}{4}$  (before the repeat); but there, on account of the same expansion being unnecessary, the result is not good.

589. *Figuration*.—For the first subject there is none. During the continuance of the second there is a "libera parte"; generally in the form of simple arpeggio, but never quite subordinate.

590. *Form*.—The formal feature is that the second subject, with its treatment, forms a perfectly complete piece by itself; thus compelling us to regard the first subject as introduction and conclusion. This is another instance where the re-arrangement of existing shapes while not sufficiently extensive to be considered novelty of form, nevertheless tends in that direction. (Compare Op. 76, No. 4, "Form.")

591. *General characteristics*.—There is one feature at least of the second subject of this piece which cannot be overlooked—that of at once impressing the memory of those who hear it. When Brahms visited the Herzogenbergs at Arnoldstein in 1878 this was one of the pieces which he played to his friends;

and Frau Elisabeth was so anxious to obtain it, that she writes soon afterwards: "I am suffering from intermittent fever in A minor; but the right medicine to cure me is not to be found in the old cookery book."

November came, and still the Intermezzi had not arrived; when she writes again—not this time a letter—but a pianoforte version of her own, of the second subject, *from memory*; and to which, as a vocal setting were affixed the following words:

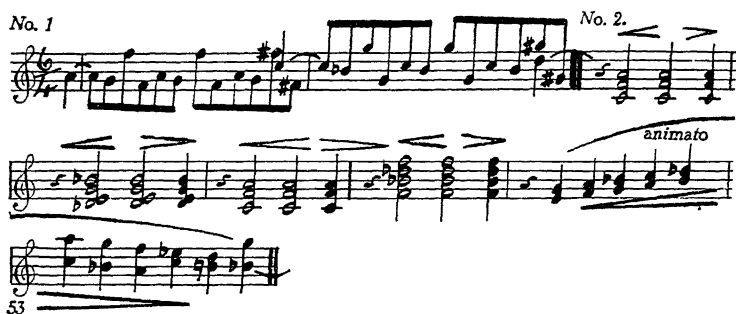
Ach! haben Sie Erbarmen  
Einmal doch mit mir Armen  
Und schicken Sie mir endlich  
Die ersehnten Intermezzi.\* (E.H.)

After this, there will be no need to emphasise the fact of this piece being melodic; as well as possessed of such other various merits.

## NO. 8. CAPRICCIO.

592. *Key, time and extent.*—In C; Grazioso ed un poco vivace (anmuthig lebhaft); time,  $\frac{6}{4}$ ; 69 bars in notation, or 83 in performance, with repeats.

593. *Thematic material.*—The two subjects of this capriccio are of quite exceptional character; the first consisting of a series



\* Ah! take pity by complying  
With the need to end my sighing  
By the longed-for pieces sending  
All my trouble thereby ending. (E. H.)



of canonic imitations, and the second making a special feature of three long reiterated notes followed by an animated cantabile. These are exhibited in the following example; a free bass accompaniment in continuous quavers being understood in both cases.

594. *Melody*.—That of the first subject is in everlasting unrest; and consists of an unremitting chase of canonic imitations, interspersed by occasional halts—as if for breath. The mere note succession is agreeable; but it cannot be said to provide us with any “melody” in the ordinary acceptation of the term. The second subject with its reiterating and intervening passionate chord progression does, however, furnish a melodic interest though even this is of an uneven, restless kind.

595. *Harmony*.—The most remarkable features occur during the second subject, in which the composer’s boldness produces the usual result that he does not proceed far before requiring an enharmonic change.\* The peculiarity about these changes is that, after a time, we grow to think as little of them as the composer himself; and the adroit way in which he approaches and leaves them makes the comparison in our estimation go hard with any other composer afterwards. Brahms had no dread of tonal progressions; and, whatever may be the case with ourselves, there does not appear to have been any reason for fear on his part. Here at bar 35, for example, he gives us the three triads, C, B and A minor, in quick succession under cover of a meandering figure in the upper part which leaves it open to us to construe the combinations differently if we so choose. A composer with methods of this description has naturally the whole circle of keys under his command at any moment.

596. *Rhythm*.—The interrupted cadence is too much in vogue to admit of a keen demarcation of phrases; the whole piece being unmetrical and of the nature of tonal “prose.”

597. *Figuration*.—This consists of a continuous left-hand part, mostly in extended arpeggios, unbound to any set figure and having its own individual significance during rests of the upper parts.

598. *Form*.—The form may be said to be lyric in the main; but without either precision in the conventional form, or the institution of any new symmetrical feature. As an approach

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\* See Huneker’s opinion, under “General characteristics.”

to the Fantasia, this piece may be braced with No. 3 of Op. 116; though differing from the latter in every other respect.

599. *General characteristics*.—This piece seems to have been something of a mystery to most critics; probably because of its being unusual to find so serious a style of writing associated with such a fantastic disposition of material. Canonic imitations have, as a rule, a basis on terra firma. We do not expect to find them wafting about in mid-air, as is the case in this instance; and it is quite natural to experience some confusion in consequence. No one will deny that the piece is effective, and that it possesses considerable charm for those who are able to play it in the way to make the imitations felt; but it does not follow that the use of the expedient was a desirable one for fantastic purposes. As matters stand, however, we may, at all events, congratulate ourselves upon possessing, in this number, a piece which is unique; and one not likely to provoke much imitation.

600. Huneker's opinion of it is as follows:—This is a genuine, whirling, fantastic capriccio; in the second section of which we encounter a melody of the later Brahms type, delighting in seizing remote keys, or rather contiguous keys that are widely disparate in relationship and forcing them to consort; the result being perversely novel, and sometimes startling. Some of the modulatory work is very interesting, particularly the enharmonic progression (bars 29, 30); and this capriccio fitly closes an opus of original and suggestive music—but music that is sealed to the amateur searching for showy or mere mellifluous effects; though after Bach and Beethoven you will perhaps grasp the involuted and poetical music here contained.

## OP. 79. TWO RHAPSODIES.

(For Pianoforte Solo.)

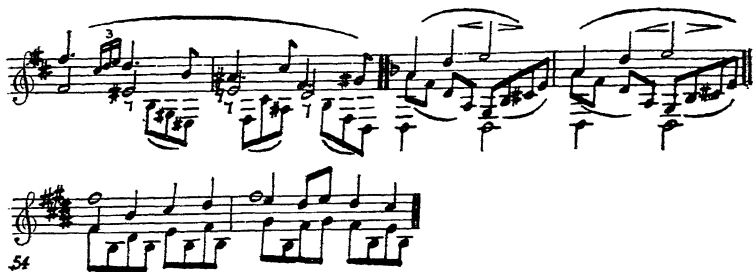
Dedicated to Elisabeth von Herzogenberg.

AGITATO AND MOLTO APPASSIONATO.

### FIRST RHAPSODY.

601. *Key, time and extent.*—In B minor (changing to D minor and B major); “agitato”; time, allabreve; 236 bars in notation; or, 290 in performance, with repeats.

602. *Thematic material.*—This consists of two subjects for the first part, and one for the trio-section; though, in addition to these three subjects, there is important episodial matter which only the fact of being logically evolved from the principal material excludes from consideration as actual theme. In Brahms it is sometimes difficult to trace where one ends and where the other begins.



603. *Melody*.—This is one of the most worrying of all Brahms' writings in respect of melody, for the reason that its Northern traits are so refreshing and yet so difficult to make understood. It is also vexing to hear the D minor subject so often quoted as if it were the best, and the pith of the work; instead of being a mere "Gegensatz" to the principal theme. Every effort should be made to grasp the full meaning of this first subject; the beauty of the others being so reflected from it, that, listened to in any other sense, they have not the same meaning. The fact is that in both these Rhapsodies (but especially in this first one) the old Norseman spirit which Vienna surroundings had becalmed broke out again, just as Brahms would sometimes in speech betray the fact that he came from Hamburg.

604. Another trouble connected with this first subject is that it lends itself to so many different renderings, all possessing an almost equal claim to finality. It would seem, for example, improbable that Brahms can have intended the asperity of some of the progressions to be delivered in strict time; notwithstanding that no indication of change appears. Thus, in the second Rhapsody, illustrations of the same feature, though milder, are always marked "ritardando." Moreover so much more meaning seems to be evolved, from treating these situations with the dignity attaching to them and making them points of departure for the subsequent motion, that, though there may be doubt as to the rendering which is *most* suitable there is none as to that which is *least* so; for that is indubitably the strict metronome beat.

605. At the tenth bar of the D minor section the melody shows a Norse characteristic, which is again met with in Op. 119, No. 4; and which consists, as it were, of giving several hard "knocks" before proceeding with the next phrase. Here the expression is inclined to the contrary of what has just been described; and without being an accelerando is at all events an alacrity in moving forward.

606. The melody of the Trio, in B, is by no means so easy to understand as its tunefulness causes some to imagine; for its phrases begin upon the second beat of the bar, are mostly five bars in length, and even then are not always formed in the same way. In short, there is so much danger either of their being wrongly understood or mixed up in one interminable rigmarole that a melodic example may here be of some use:—



607. *Harmony*.—The harmony of this piece cannot be shortly dealt with; its fertility of suggestion provoking the critic to the same kind of remark as that with which Henry v. Herzogenberg met Röntgen's desire that he should "describe" the B flat Concerto., viz.: "Hearing the work is the only thing which is of any good." However there are some progressions which may be usefully pointed out even in so short an account. After the interest presented by the rough progressions already alluded to (bars 5 and 9-10) a remarkable feature is presented by the series of modulations commencing with bar 10 of the D minor section and extending to return of the theme. Another important progression sets in 13 bars before the trio, and one which presents excessive technical difficulty unless the right hand is brought to the relief of the left for the upper-notes of the latter's extended chords.

608. *Rhythm*.—The rhythmic and melodic features so merge in this piece that much which appertains to the former has already been alluded to, and need not be repeated. The irregular formation of the trio-phrases has, for example, been shown; but, in a piece of this Northern character, it would be quite unsafe to assume that where the phrases, in respect of the number of their bars, appear to be regularly formed, they are therefore regular in fact. An impatience of metrical restraint is precisely what the composition most truthfully expresses. The free open air and the exhilaration due to physical effort are in natural opposition of a prim arrangement. Only an occasional lull, as it were, to survey the beauty of the scene, brings us back to the set phrase; and even then, as we have seen, not to a phrase-form cut with any extreme precision. This is beautifully exemplified in the diminuendo Coda; which, although obviously based upon the trio material, has nevertheless its own rhythm, with a continually growing faintness of demarcation until the end is reached.

609. *Figuration*.—This is one of the very few Brahms piano works which contains a scale passage; and no connoisseur can possibly feel surprise at such rarity considering that even when scale passages do occur they invariably inspire the feeling that the piece would have been better without them. Of figuration in the ordinary sense this Rhapsody contains nothing beyond simple dispersions in favour of a continued quaver motion occasionally.

610. *Form*.—The “geschlossene” (or locked-up) form of both the Rhapsodies having been put upon record by Frau v. Herzogenberg, it follows that little is necessary under this head, except to say that the precise term of the lady’s choice is as apt as it is homely for the description of all lyric compositions.

611. *General characteristics*.—As these are sufficiently implied by the foregoing the following is supplemental:—

This work was first played in England by Mlle. Janotha in 1881. Huneke’s view of its merits as a composition is as follows:—

“This rhapsody is as unrhapsodic as you can well imagine. It is drastic, knotty, full of insoluble ideas, the melodic contour far from melting and indeed hardly plastic. The mood is sternly Dorian and darkling. It is the intellectual Brahms who confronts us with his supreme disdain for what we like or dislike; it is Brahms giving utterance to bitter truths, and only when he reaches the section in D minor does he relax and sing in smoother accents; but those common chords in B flat ruthlessly interrupt the Norse-like melody, and we are once again launched upon the sea of troubled argument. This work always sounds to me as if its composer were trying to prove something algebraic, all the while knitting his awful brows in the most logical manner. There is little rhapsody in it, but of intellectual acrimoniousness much. The second melody has an astringency that is very grateful to mental palates weary of the sweets of other composers.

“The Trio is another typical melody of the sort referred to. You could swear it is Brahms, even if heard in a dark room with your ears closed—to be very Irish! The merging of this theme into the first is characteristically accomplished, and the old dispute is renewed. As acrid as decaying bronze is this rhapsody, the subsidiary melody in D minor being the one bit of relief throughout. There are scales but surely not for dis-

play, and the regularly constructed Coda is very interesting. This first Rhapsody is for the head rather than the heart."

## SECOND RHAPSODY.

612. *Key, time and extent.*—In G minor (changing to B minor); *Molto passionato ma non troppo allegro*; time, common; 124 bars in notation; or, 156 in performance, with repeats.

613. *Thematic material.*—The change of key mentioned above is merely transient; not being for a trio-section, as might be supposed. The result is that there are only two main subjects; and, as these are very lightly contrasted, an effect of flowing continuity is imparted to the whole. The themes commence as under:—

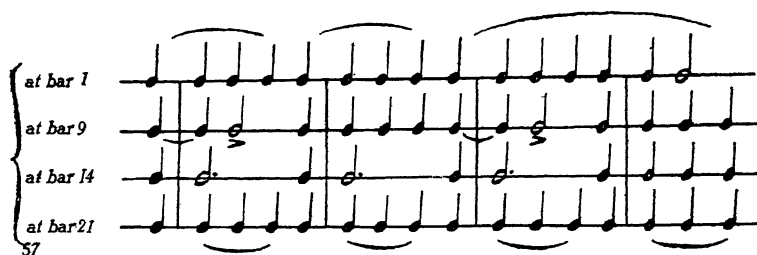


614. *Melody.*—The variety of melodic material presented by this piece is exemplified by the fact that its first subject consists of three divisions, each of which would alone suffice for copious development, each of which however is but plainly stated and the whole of which in succession give an impression of continuous flow in spite of their contrasts. When we come to the second subject moreover our attention is arrested still more; for there we have again in evidence the splendid subject of the eloquence of the single note—one which has arrested the attention of every serious writer upon music and has been more or less cultivated by every composer worthy of the name. The legendary and ballade-like character imparted to this piece as

a consequence of this form of expression will be at once evident to all who hear it.

615. *Harmony*.—The crude progressions of the first subject at the pause bars are such that, when the second phrase concludes at bar 9, the chord of the key in which the piece is set has still not been heard; though we have in the short space of 8 bars traversed the keys of  $\bar{E}$  flat, F, C, G, A, E and B. This may be taken as a record instance of independence of tonality displayed in an original statement; and it shows that although it is usual to find this piece referred to as free of the peculiar traits of No. 1 it really possesses them in even more pronounced form. It can easily be understood that, after such erratical courses, the rigid firmness of the monotone subject, with its complete domination by the tonic chord, forms a fine contrast.

616. *Rhythm*.—The general outline being lyric and the rhythm throughout of duple character it follows that for any rhythmic variety the piece will be dependent upon contrasts within the phrase; and these are very interesting. As might easily be guessed, the inexorable monotone effect demands a steady crotchet motion which never swerves. As against that we have three varieties within the first subject; corresponding to the three sections of that melody. There are, therefore, four phrase formations; which may be usefully brought together for comparison, thus:—





of the second subject might perhaps be also described as conventional and plain; but there is a difference in this case, on account of its poetical application. The meaning of the latter lies in its echoing the intention of the melody which it accompanies; both melody and accompaniment displaying the same tragic expression of the monotone.

618. *Form*.—In respect of this feature the reader is referred to what was said of the first rhapsody. The form is lyric; and the difference between this piece and the last consists in its not only being lyric in respect of outline, but also, for the most part, regular in formation of phrase.

619. *General characteristics*.—As these are sufficiently implied by the foregoing the following particulars are supplemental:—

This work was first played in England by Madame Schumann in 1882; being introduced as "having two marked themes and intervening episodes connecting them with the logical precession for which Brahms is celebrated." Huneke's view of it is as follows:—

"This work is more ballad-like than rhapsodic, yet a distinct narrative and one about which I love to drape all manner of subjective imaginings. The bold modulation of the theme, its swiftness, fervour and power are fascinating. . . . You can fairly revel in the exhibition of tragic force, in the free, firm, bold handling of a subject stripped of all musical verbiage and reduced to its lowest mathematical term. The working out is famous in its intensity, in its grip; never for a moment is the theme lost, never for a moment is subsidiary material introduced. . . . A wonderful, glorious, bracing tone-picture in which Brahms the philosopher burns the boats of his old age and becomes for the time a youthful Faust in search of a sensation. A hurricane of emotion that is barely stilled at the end, this rhapsody reminds me of the bardic recital of some old border ballad. . . . It is an epic for the keyboard, and before its cryptic tones we shudder and are amazed!"

620. The notice of these two Rhapsodies would scarcely be complete without some reference to the circumstances of their dedication, as revealed to us in the letters of Elisabeth v. Herzogenberg. Both pieces were composed in the summer of 1879; and, in January of the following year, Brahms, having had some concert affairs in the Rhine district, visited the Herzogenbergs at Leipzig, on his way back to Vienna. He then played these

pieces to Frau Elisabeth; whom we find, on February 4, 1880, writing to thank him for the copy. She describes how hard in the meantime she has tried to remember them; mentioning their many beauties, and singling out for special praise some passages to which it may interest the reader to refer.

She expresses, on the whole, a preference for the one in G minor; in which she finds the pathos at the end of the development (bar 59 and following) quite unique in its way:—also the rise to the chord of E dominant, at bar 80, and the subsequent fall to the pause before return of the theme.

With regard to the B minor Rhapsody, she tells Brahms that it is not because the other is her favourite that she is insensible to this one's powerful pungent beauty; and she especially mentions the five suggestive bars (89-93) by which its sweet trio is introduced; as also the last fifteen bars, with their right hand triplet passages; glad that the piece concludes in this way, so that this may form the last impression.

Up to this point there seems to have been no mention of a dedication, but soon we find Brahms wanting to know whether she can suggest a better title for the pieces; and adding that the dedication to herself, if she will allow it, is one which she *cannot* improve upon.

She writes her thanks from Florence on May 3, 1880, taking occasion also to express herself in favour of the mere term "Clavierstücke" (pieces); *just because it says nothing*; besides which it appears to her that the concise form of these pieces is somewhat in opposition to the general notion of a "Rhapsody."

On July 11 the pieces were still unissued, for which she is glad; as Brahms' friends, the Engelmanns, are expected, and she looks forward to the pleasure of flaunting herself before Emma, the pianist, by playing something to her which she does not yet know. But on the twenty-third of the same month, her joy is crowned; and she is able to contemplate the work in all its glory.

Frau Herzogenberg's criticisms are well worthy of attention for their musical value. But the homely friendship and deep interest she exhibits will probably attract the reader still more.

## OP. 83. CONCERTO NO. 2, IN B FLAT.

*(For Piano and Orchestra.)*

Dedicated to his dear friend and master, Edward Marxsen.

ALLEGRO NON TROPPO. ALLEGRO APPASSIONATO. ANDANTE. ALLEGRO  
GRAZIOSO.

Scored for 2 Flutes, 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets, 2 Bassoons, 4 Horns, 2  
Trumpets, Drums and Strings.

### NO. I. ALLEGRO NON TROPPO.

621. *Key time and extent.*—In B flat (changing to F minor, B minor and B flat minor); allegro non troppo; time, common; 376 bars.

622. *General description.*—It is natural in the first place to consider this work in relation to its predecessor, Op. 15, and in doing so it has been the view of most critics that it represents some change of attitude on the composer's part. Such opinions are well deserving of respect, as they repose upon a basis which is quite intelligible; that, namely of a comparison of the thematic material of the respective works, with the result of showing that of the present concerto to be more natural and enticing, more human and sympathetic than the other. It is however quite possible to admit all this and yet fail to perceive that the composer had in any way changed his view of what a concerto should be; and if on the one hand such points of difference may be easily collected, there may, just as easily on the other, be points of resemblance brought to notice, not merely superficial as relating to mode of execution, but vital, as relating to the main plan. So far as the mere exterior of the work is concerned, and notwithstanding the admittedly gentler

character of the present concerto, the ground for surprise is rather that, after twenty years of such varied experience, the change was not greater still.

623. This movement opens beautifully, but peculiarly, with a horn passage to which the piano immediately responds in echo, afterwards proceeding to what may be called a first solo, but which is in reality a mere bravura prelude by which the orchestral statement is introduced. The following example of the first subject shows the opening of the latter :



624. This orchestral statement, like that of the former concerto, passes practically the whole material of the movement in review; the intention seeming to have been to render it a complete epitome. It is therefore a feature of the work that one important subject (which will be presently referred to) should be conspicuous by its absence from this; for Brahms is not a composer in whose case we dare venture to attribute anything whatever to chance. The second subject commences as under :



625. To this succeeds a very important march-like motive, in staccato chords and sharply punctuated rhythm; leading to what is really the solo instrument's triumphant entrance. And

triumphant it is, in every sense; not only in mere outward effect but also in the degree of perfection attained, wherewith the previously stated material is now handled and developed. The technical difficulty is of course immense; and as one critic observes there are scarcely any eight consecutive bars to be found which do not bring the entire keyboard into requisition.

626. Some of the episodial work which now occurs is not only poetically beautiful but is really of the nature of subject-matter; so much so that the compression of an account of this work within a short space must be clearly understood to involve many omissions. It will suffice therefore to say that from the second subject new material is now evolved giving rise to much charming dialogue and leading eventually to what we may here describe as third subject—the one already mentioned as rather remarkably left out of the original orchestral exposition. It opens as follows:



627. Hereupon we have the second important orchestral tutti, dwelling mostly upon the second subject and leading to the development; which, strange to say, is only about sixty bars in length. Within that space however it contrives to work up a climax of interest for the return: an interest largely induced by the composer's power of control, which produces a foreboding of the coming theme long before its actual appearance.

628. From this point the subjects are passed in review in the ordinary way, the dominating keys being the tonic and its parallel minor. The coda is approached somewhat warningly by a succession of low trills in the solo part, and proceeds with such a general and dramatic uprise that the first subject thereby

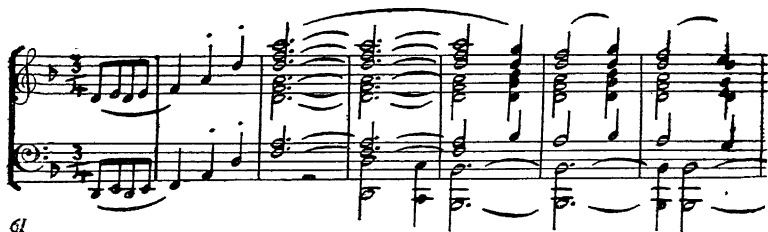
acquires a full expression of joy forming an appropriate and triumphant conclusion to the movement.

629. Carl Söhle's view of this movement is that although it is constructed in sonata form, with two contrasted subjects, it becomes difficult to follow, in consequence of the melodic independence of the episodial work. He considers that, in this respect, the present movement differs totally from the others; which follow the classic form in every particular, notwithstanding that the material of which they are composed is so modern. Contrasted with the previous concerto he likens it to clear and noble wine, in comparison with the "must in incipient fermentation" of the former work. He considers it the finest of its kind since Beethoven; and that all the best points of Chopin, Schumann and Liszt are here to be found; combined with a stronger individuality than either of them possess.

## NO. 2. ALLEGRO APPASSIONATO.

630. *Key time and extent.*—In D minor (changing to D major); allegro appassionato; time,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ; 464 in notation, or 570 in performance, with repeat.

631. *General description.*—This movement (which is not positively named "scherzo,"\* probably because there was no such need) has a roughness about certain parts of it which, without reminding us of the first concerto, guide our thoughts in that direction. The first subject is of this kind and opens as under:



632. There is something of rustic village character about this theme; but, whatever meaning we may attach to it, it

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\* Brahms himself called it one, see 641.

certainly forms a striking contrast to everything that has gone before. Between this and the trio an episode of graceful and waving character occurs having a distinct affinity to much of the after-material. The "trio" itself is a sort of villagers' dance, and in that sense somewhat amusing by the obvious pictures which it brings before the mind. It opens as under :



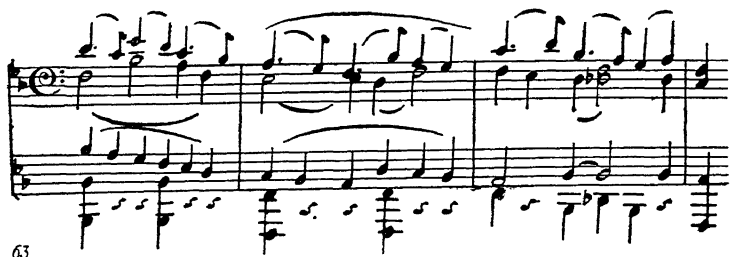
633. Much of this is delivered by orchestra alone, the solo instrument being silent for about fifty bars; and the work which now intervenes for it before the return is strangely mixed, its most interesting feature being a Schumannish cantabile. As soon as the repetition groups commence, all material connected with the trio-section is completely abandoned, and the work may to some extent be considered as merely formal; the old material being of course well manipulated to a conclusion, but not otherwise presenting any point of interest.

### NO. 3. ANDANTE.

634. *Key, time and extent.*—In B flat (changing to F sharp and B flat minor); Andante (changing to "più adagio"); time,  $\frac{6}{4}$ ; 99 bars.

635. *General description.*—It is from this point that the work may be fairly said to consist of "everybody's music"; and so truly does this seem to be the case that abstruse enquiry is quite beside the point. There is but one subject to be properly so called; delivered by the violoncello and afterwards made the subject of fantastic treatment by the solo instrument. The grace and variety of these elaborations afford much matter of astonishment for those who have a fixed idea of Brahms'

ungainliness, and they also explain the view as to a change of attitude on his part to which reference was made at the commencement of this notice; for, instead of giving us an impression of thoughtful science, and of ingenious construction, we are now quite free to imagine ourselves listening to an extemporaneous performance. The theme opens as under:—



636. There is an episode in F sharp; but the contrast it offers is not such as to disturb the general peacefulness. Throughout the movement the violoncello and clarinet play important parts; and now towards conclusion the latter instrument bespeaks the gentle accompaniment of the piano for its almost devotional phrases. The triumph of the solo instrument is in the grace of its subserviency and in the high degree of artistic finish which characterises all the work entrusted to it.

#### NO. 4. ALLEGRETTO GRAZIOSO.

637. *Key, time and extent.*—In B flat (changing to F, also to D); Allegretto grazioso (changing to “un poco più lento”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 489 bars.

638. *General description.*—This movement is in the Rondo-form of which we have so many examples, and to which it so precisely conforms that, from that aspect, there is no occasion for remark. Accordingly, the three subjects may just as well be presented simultaneously; and, as their mutual relations are quite conventional, ordinary developments may be taken as understood.





639. The interest centres in this instance not so much upon the mode of treatment as upon the material itself. The genality of the themes has of course been continually observed; but the evidence they offer of the complete manner in which Brahms, a North German, had become acclimatised at Vienna seems generally to escape observation. Yet if we examine these subjects we can scarcely fail to be struck by what we may perhaps call their "local" character—nor fail to recognise that herein lies the difference which some have construed as a change of attitude instead of rather one of atmosphere. As for the second subject it is Hungarian, pure and simple; whilst in regard to each of the others traits might easily be quoted to show them to have a kindred origin. The first subject really divides into two, its second member being even stronger in local colour than the first; besides which even the working shows the same spirit—as, for example, where the solo instrument with some demonstration tries to get what we may call a foothold upon the second subject and fails to do so. Twice is the attempt made but only on the third occasion does it succeed; and when it does so it succeeds also in realising for us the change which had come over the composer as the consequence of his surroundings. Notwithstanding an extreme elaboration the whole of this work is, from the analytical standpoint, quite simple. Thus Brahms whose continual divergence from the bar-length with which his movements commence is so

well known is not Brahms in this case. No movement of this concerto ever changes its time; rhythmic varieties even within the bar being less than usual. It is therefore easy for the reader to conceive what child's play it must have been for Brahms to develop this finale to his heart's content and how completely he had at all events on this occasion set himself out to make friends. A neglect of the first two movements may be intelligible if not justified; but that of the andante and finale is more than can be understood.

640. Speaking of the whole work, Fuller-Maitland considers that it "has many of the uncompromising characteristics of the first concerto, with a greatly increased amount of obvious beauty in the themes themselves and in their development."

Huneker's opinion of it is as follows:

"In this work there is less of the philosophic brooding of the first concerto. It is more passionate, more fluent, more direct and more dramatic. It shows the same unerring grasp of construction; but there is, throughout, more of the musician of the world, less of the introspective and contemplative poet. It is brilliant—especially the passage work—for the piano. The enunciation of the first theme by the horn is memorable; beautiful too is the violoncello solo in the slow movement, while the Hungarian finale contains some of the most charming pages written for piano and orchestra. It is dashing and piquant, and the second theme is truly Magyar. This concerto is always sure to be more popular than the first, with its Faust-like questionings. Brahms has dared to be worldly and less recondite for once."

## NOTES.

641. References to this concerto in the Herzogenberg letters are: Brahms, July 7, 1881.—"I must tell you that I have written just a little Piano-Concerto, with just a dear little Scherzo. It is in B flat; but though it is a good key, I fear I have tapped it too often."

Herzogenberg, October 28, 1881.—"Röntgens want me to 'describe' the Concerto; but I don't happen to be Ehlert\* and

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\* The critic who sometimes indulged in fanciful, generally adverse, criticisms of the Brahms works.

should not know what to say that would not appear to be distasteful. Hearing the work is the only thing that is of any good."

Brahms, November 2, 1881.—"In Meiningen it was particularly charming."

This refers to Brahms' visit to Meiningen at v. Bülow's invitation, and to the performance there of this concerto for which he afterwards returned, and which took place on November 27. The first public performance of it however was at Budapest where Brahms had played the solo part on the ninth of the same month.

Brahms again played the concerto at the New Year concert at Leipzig (1882), but it was then very tamely received; even the "*Musikalisches Wochenblatt*," which had always been a friend to Brahms being constrained to admit as much. The result was however different at Hamburg, where Brahms played the concerto a few days afterwards.

Brahms, May 9, 1883.—"If I hadn't to start for Cologne in a couple of hours I should write more." This refers to the sixtieth music festival of the Lower Rhine (May 11-15) at which Brahms again played the concerto; after which the next performance to which reference is made was with Bülow's Meiningen Orchestra in Vienna, Budapest and Graz in December, 1884, the last being Brahms' direction of the work (to D'Albert's solo) at Meiningen, December 25, 1887.

★★ This concerto has been arranged for four hands on one piano by the composer (the edition is in score); also for piano duet by Robert Keller. An edition is also published of the pianoforte solo.

## OP. 116. SEVEN FANTASIAS.

(*For Pianoforte Solo.*)

Nos. 1, 3 AND 7 ENTITLED "CAPRICCIO."

Nos. 2, 4, 5 AND 6 ENTITLED "INTERMEZZO."

### NO. 1. CAPRICCIO.

642. *Key, time and extent.*—In D minor; Presto energico; time,  $\frac{3}{8}$ ; 207 bars.

643. *Thematic material.*—The three subjects in this movement succeed one another so rapidly and are so logically united that a first reading becomes highly deceptive. A player unaccustomed to Brahms has first to get reconciled to his manner of elevating what in ordinary course should be the mere completion of a subject to the dignity of separate treatment; but, after he has done so, he is more than likely to regard the ordinary mode of transition from subject to subject with different eyes. Certain it is that in adopting this method, Brahms has practically discovered a new form—and one that must live and thrive, even into the far future. The term "subject" is applied to the separate items of material in this case merely for want of a better term, and in order to secure general comprehension by the use of conventional language. But, in reality, the whole piece is woven from *one* subject; the various "limbs" of which—so to speak—are afterwards endowed with such individual interest and work so naturally side by side that the musical entity resulting is one which compresses a whole symphonic development into two or three pages. These three subjects (or members of the one subject according to the point of view adopted) are as under :

No. 1.

No. 2.

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8ves

644. *Melody*.—A glance at the above example will show the reader that although there is a sustained quaver motion by means of which the piece never for an instant lags the “melodic-beat,” if it may be so termed, is of three different degrees of duration. The melody of No. 1 lies in the upper part; and is hasty, feverish, restless—in quavers. That of No. 2 lies in the bass; and is by comparison calm and remonstrative—in crotchets. That of No. 3 lies in the upper part; and is wailing and complaining—in dotted crotchets. Every one of these melodies ignores the bar-line; crossing it as if it did not exist. Even No. 1, which, being in quavers, might be supposed *obliged* to mark the bar, invariably slurs across it, to tied accompanying parts. The method of it all is so precise that no room would seem to remain for heart outpourings. Yet the melody is of such passionate and resolute character as to give the effect of spontaneity.

645. *Harmony*.—The progressions in this number do not call for special remark, with the exception of that commencing at bar 83 and leading to enharmonic change. As for suspensions occurring on the “non-accent,” they are so frequent that they cease to form a feature; besides which, the more travelled in Brahms we are, the less importance we attach to such considerations. We have no longer to do with “place-accents,” but only with “sense-accents”; so that harmony questions which entail a reference to the respective importance of beats no longer apply.

646. *Rhythm*.—The phrase-formations are duple; whilst subordinate rhythmical traits are described under "Melody" (q.v.).

647. *Figuration*.—None.

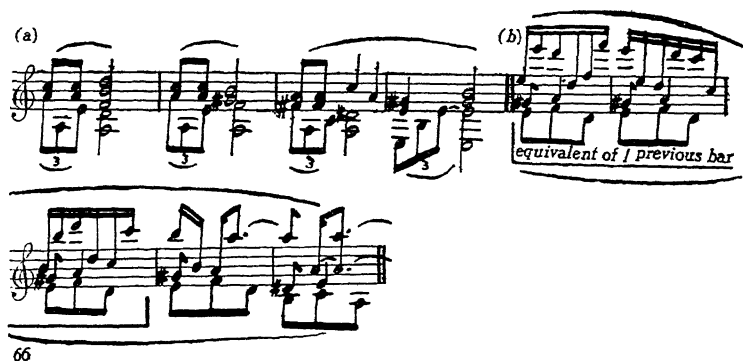
648. *Form*.—The form is somewhat difficult to define, for reasons described under "Thematic Material" (q.v.). The result of so much compression of thought is to produce features which lend themselves readily to various applications. As already mentioned the safest way is to regard the form as new.

649. *General characteristics*.—Fuller-Maitland, taking this work as a starting point, says that in the remaining works, there is a "new world revealed to the pianist." Max Vogrich strangely finds in it only "an exquisite and highly effective piece." Huneker considers it "the later Brahms with a vengeance," and thinks that it realises what Hadow calls "organic unity in the emotional aspect with organic diversity in the choice of keys."

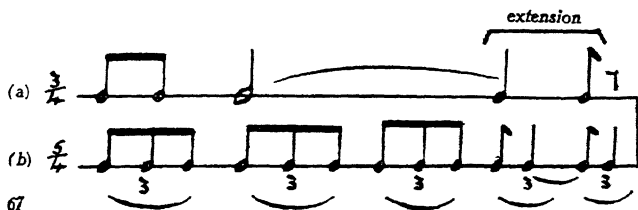
## NO. 2. INTERMEZZO.

650. *Key, time and extent*.—In A minor; andante (changing to "non troppo presto"); with three-quaver equivalent of previous crotchet; time,  $\frac{3}{4}$  (changing to  $\frac{3}{8}$ ); 86 bars.

651. *Thematic material*.—This number is pointedly marked off into two sections (corresponding with the changes of time and movement noted above); a separate subject being devoted to each. The change in movement is however a mere question of notation; the previous crotchet pulsation now becoming an entire bar. It follows, therefore, that, as the new subject proceeds in five-bar phrases, the real change is not one of movement at all, but one from  $\frac{3}{4}$  to  $\frac{5}{4}$  time. The contrast is one of the most interesting ever evolved from the continuation of one pulsation; for the new bar, being in  $\frac{3}{8}$ , is practically the conversion of the former crotchet into a triplet, besides which each quaver of the new triplet is subjected to the most capricious and delicate subdivisions—altogether a piece of piano writing of such exquisite refinement as to vie with any sample of the kind possible to be compared with it. The two subjects are as follow:



652. *Melody*.—From the above it will be clear that in scanning the melody of this piece we have to regard the whole of “(b)” in the above example as equivalent to the extension of only a single bar at “(a).” This perhaps will be better understood if the two are braced, thus :



653. Unless we realise in this way the unity of feeling existing between the apparently different movements we shall be apt, in our rendering, to convert a delicate lyric into a mere fantasia.

654. *Harmony*.—There is nothing novel under this head ; but on the other hand there is an abundant supply of good examples of the use of ordinary progressions ; so much so that a teacher of harmony would do well to note the value of this piece as a means of illustration. The “non troppo presto” section teems with instances of chromatic major thirds, so difficult to find when one happens to be looking for them. And bars 63 to 65 contain such a sequence of tetrads as is not to be met with every day—evidently Brahms’ way of confusing the

listener with regard to key so as to create a feeling of expectation to make him welcome the return of the opening theme.

655. *Rhythm*.—The rhythm of the first section contains nothing to arrest attention being:  $\parallel: 4 + (4 + 1) : \parallel$

656. That of the second section, however, is quite a different matter; and in order to spare repetition the reader is advised to refer to what was said under "Rhythm" in treating of Op. 21 (a). He will there observe how sometimes a refinement of construction leads to various rhythmical possibilities the choice between which is not only a question of artistic judgment but relates also to the mood of the player. It is to the seventeen bars counting from bar 16 of the "non troppo presto" to the "andante" that this remark is intended to apply.

657. *Figuration*.—The only figuration is the dispersion of the octave, in ascending and descending alternately, presented by the upper part of the "non troppo presto."

658. *Form*.—The form is pure lyric; but its discernment is somewhat obscured by the fantasia-like aspect of the notation. This however has already been sufficiently explained.

659. *General characteristics*.—What characterises this piece most is undoubtedly the ethereal character of its middle stanza, contrasted as it is with the peaceful sadness of the opening. The calm resignation here betokened, with the change by which it is followed, has been beautifully pictured by Huneker, who says: "Its sweet melancholy has the resigned quality that Maeterlinck speaks of when describing an old man who sits serenely in his chair and listens to the spiritual messages in the air."

This conception is not programmistic; and it is not made by the writer as who should say: "The music means *that!*" But it truthfully describes the impression; and, if we choose to lend ourselves to it literally, we must allow that the disappearance of the sprites (six bars prior to the last andante) is as lovely an instance of *diminuendo* melting into a return theme as can anywhere be found.

### NO. 3. CAPRICCIO.

660. *Key, time and extent*.—In G minor (changing to E flat); *allegro passionato* (changing to "un poco meno allegro"); time, *allabreve*; 105 bars in notation; or, 116 in performance, with repeats.



661. *Thematic material*.—This is the first piece of the set which corresponds in any way with conventional ideas of the title "Fantasia," applied to the whole collection; the fact being that notwithstanding his immense painstaking in the compositions themselves it seems to have been a bore to Brahms to name them. But publishers insist upon a title, however much the composer may deem the music to be capable of speaking for itself; and as this was probably the origin of the naming in question it is not advisable to treat it from the critical point of view. The only alternative to that course would be to regard Brahms' definition of the term "Fantasia" as something different from the ordinary.

662. Accordingly we have for once that apparent contradiction in terms—a Brahms fantasia. Not erratic, however; but simply the association of unwonted effects. And, as whatever we may notice in reviewing Brahms is bound to be pronounced of its kind, this amounts to a positive intrusion of the new theme—albeit a pleasant intrusion, like to the arrival of some unexpected friend. The following exhibits the commencement of each subject.



663. *Melody*.—The salience of contrast alluded to above is neither due to melody, harmony nor rhythm; but equally to all three. So far as melody is concerned, the principal feature of the entire first section is represented by the "sf" of the above example; an extreme persistence in the use of this syncopation being followed in the cantabile by a total absence of all such trait. We see therefore that the "Syncopen-Komponist," as Brahms in derision was called, could easily emancipate himself from the palpitating effect of defying the normal beat when he wanted a contrast; and here, in this "quasi-trio," we have as firm a "sledge-hammer" stroke as the most inveterate lover of "square-music" could desire. The imaginary singer who delivers this melody seems not even to know that such a thing

as syncopation exists—or, at most, he is an old churchgoer to whom such whims are heresy. Herein lies the fantastic element; for we cannot suppose Brahms to have been unable to apply his “grafty-crafty” manner to the welding of the two themes, and the fact of his not having done so bespeaks intention.

664. *Harmony*.—The fullness of harmony represented by the “poco meno allegro” may fairly be taken as the maximum of which the piano is capable. The whole piece is a veritable “Organ Fantasia”; and as such, may be commended to organists capable of adapting it to their instrument. Still, so far as mere progressions are concerned there is simply the usual fertility; except that in the middle section an extra free use is made of the “under-changing-note” with remarkably ponderous effect.

665. *Rhythm*.—The rhythm is entirely duple; but the extensions of phrase consequent upon the use of augmentations at the end of first and final sections constitute a feature.

666. *Figuration*.—This consists only of broken chords and occasional arpeggios within the octave during first and final sections. In the middle section there is no figuration.

667. *Form*.—The fantasia-like character imputed to this piece must here be left out of account. The symmetry of form points the other way; and it is therefore within the reader's discretion to choose whichever of these contending features he may consider paramount.

668. *General characteristics*.—Fuller-Maitland considers that the middle section recalls the style of the early piano sonatas. That is so; and to an extent which would not render it surprising were we told that this portion had been composed years before it was included in this piece; which might also help to account for the loose way in which the two themes hang together. That this idea is not altogether strange would appear from a remark of Huneker's, where he says:

“Brahms was not a young man when he wrote this opus. Yet for the most part it is astonishingly youthful and elastic.”

#### NO. 4. INTERMEZZO.

669. *Key, time and extent*.—In E; Adagio; time,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ; 72 bars.

670. *Thematic material*.—For sheer “Stoff,” as the Germans call it, it would be hard to find another piece of 72 bars to compare with this number. The feature is somewhat embarrassing in describing its thematic material; for the reader who comes fresh from conventional experiences may reasonably find it difficult to believe in the existence of *three* subjects, all suitably developed, within so short a compass. Yet this is so. Moreover, the three subjects are all essentially different without their juxtaposition in the least disturbing matters. In face of this the remark is almost superfluous that no single note could be removed without sensible injury—indeed the concentration of meaning upon the *single-note* is a trait which this piece may well be quoted as exemplifying. Generally speaking Brahms, in his later pianoforte works, has well taught us that the contents of a piece are by no means to be estimated by the bulk of it; but it is only here and there that the value of the single-note is so presented as to appear obvious to those unaccustomed to this style of music. This little piece however may be specially commended for such “initiation.”

671. The subjects if, by the reader's permission they may so be called, are as under :



672. *Melody*.—The melody is of the nature of dialogue; and this so truly that it will but help the player to a better rendering if he imagine it a duet pure and simple. This is opened by the lower voice with a short phrase which forms the burden of the piece; and the response which follows, and which is elegantly varied on future repetitions leads logically to and from subjects 2 and 3; as quoted above. The effect at bar 38 (third subject) where the voices seem obviously to unite, is a sample of the refined manner in which Brahms used conven-

tional means. The simultaneous subsidence of one phrase and commencement of the next at bar 41; the melodic inflections represented by the third beats of bars 45 to 48; and the melodic expression of the diminuendo bars 31 to 33 are all recommended to attention, though they by no means exhaust the list of melodic features.

673. *Harmony*.—A feature consists of the pleading effect obtained by the augmented triad in the leading phrase with which the piece opens. The importance of this lies in its being, as it were, the nucleus of the work; rendering an ultra-refinement of harmony in perfect keeping. Otherwise, the delicacy of combinations might feasibly appear extravagant. The piece so abounds in choice progressions that it is impossible to particularise; but one sample may be given from which to draw conclusions. It is that of the diminuendo at bar 31, referred to in the last paragraph.



674. *Rhythm*.—The rhythm is so gentle that there is a diminution of acuteness in the expectation of recurring accent. The consequence that we listen to phrases of four, five and seven bar length without any keen consciousness of the difference between them. Should any student wish for an illustration of what constitutes the triumph of a refined style he has it therefore in the precept that—

Refinement of phrase-formation tends to weaken emphasis—

and in the illustrations of that precept here afforded; say, for example sake, of bars 6 to 10 and 11 to 15 for five-bar, and of bars 20 to 26 and 27 to 33 for seven-bar phrases.

675. *Figuration*.—There is a subordinate arpeggio accompaniment to the third subject; even that being almost too essential to be described as figuration.

676. *Form*.—The leading passage referred to stands curi-

ously to this piece, for it is not a refrain although it stands in place of one. The form is however lyric in any case.

677. *General characteristics*.—This piece is responsible for one of Huneker's ecstasies in course of which he describes the outlines as so slender that they seem to wave and weave in the air; while Fuller-Maitland considers that it exhausts the possibilities of special piano effect in its own direction.

## NO. 5. INTERMEZZO.

678. *Key, time and extent*.—In E minor; "Andante con grazia ed intimissimo sentimento"; time,  $\frac{6}{8}$ ; 44 bars in notation; or, 78 in performance, with repeats.

679. *Thematic material*.—Those who know the fourth ballade of Op. 10, and who have therefore unravelled the second part of the "più lento" section of that work are already aware of what Brahms' "intimissimo sentimento" means. It relates to a peculiar intricacy, and happens in passages which seem to pertain to keyboard mysteries which the composer has himself unlocked, and which he smilingly hands over to us for solution. There is much meaning in Huneker's phrase when he says that "the intimacy is all on the side of the composer," if we take it to refer to the special kind of technique which Brahms employed; and it is by means of this view that we shall soonest arrive at an easy performance. It leads us in the case of this first subject, for instance, to use the "finger-over-finger" method; which is not always to be disdained, even though authorities decree it to be as dead as a door-nail; nor does it diminish our regard for this piece to find that it enables us to picture Brahms (who had an inveterate habit of humming to himself as he played) seated at the piano and toyishly "discovering" the notes as he went along.

680. The second subject contrasts with the first by taking its cue from the sostenuto half-cadence; commencing smoothly (instead of disjointed as was the first subject) and gradually eradicating that feature until the original rhythm returns.

681. The commencement of the subjects is here exhibited; two staves being indispensable for the first one.

682. *Melody*.—The melody of this number forms as near an approach to humour in Brahms as we shall ever get. The mode of expression adopted is that of a series of inflectional



surprises; and, when these have done their best (or worst, according to our view) the venue is suddenly changed; rhythm takes the matter up, and goes capering off, only by and by to land us at the same place again.

683. *Harmony*.—The chords herein employed may be all very well for Brahms, but they would meet with scant favour at an examination. The fact is that, when Saint-Saëns said there was no end to forms of figuration, he might easily have extended his remark to include combinations as well; for, though prime chords are limited in number, the same cannot be said of the ways of getting at them; hovering over them; turning them upside down; in and out; round and round; and generally speaking playing the deuce with them. There is no combination conceivable as standing completely outside the pale of justification. If there had been, Brahms would have hit upon it in this number.

684. *Rhythm*.—This is duple and regular throughout.

685. *Figuration*.—None.

686. *Form*.—Lyric, in two sections without Trio or Coda. Slightly prolonged final cadence.

687. *General characteristics*.—The leading feature is humour—but of the “dry” order in contradistinction to that which is boisterous or mischievous. The humour is all the better for being unconscious; as unconscious it undoubtedly was; and in order to interpret it an ultra delicate—not to say fastidious—touch is requisite combined with old-time fingering.

It should perhaps be mentioned under this heading that the present number mystifies critics considerably. “I confess it is gnomic for me,” says one. Then, a little farther on, we hear that:

“You must long pursue this cryptic bit of writing before you begin to unravel its complicated meanings,” etc. There is really no need for all this. The piece is one in

which Brahms was on confidential terms with his beloved keyboard; and, in order to play it easily, all that we have to do is to approach it in the same way.

## NO. 6. INTERMEZZO.

688. *Key, time and extent.*—In E (changing to G sharp minor); “Andantino teneramente”; time,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ; 67 bars.

689. *Thematic material.*—The first subject in this case is of minuet character—one of the stately processional kind which shows off this form to advantage. But all idea of the complete composition being regarded as a minuet is dispelled by the second subject, the rhythm suggested by the phrase-formation of which is in common-time notwithstanding that the notation is in  $\frac{3}{4}$ . The peculiar form of *agitato* which is produced by setting up a mild antagonism between the accentuation due to the bar and that due to the phrase is one to which Brahms has frequent recourse, and its refinement of expression cannot fail to appeal to the player who, in respect of bars 2 to 9, inclusive, of the G sharp minor section, will take the trouble to note that the phrases themselves are really cast in six bars of common time. The vagueness therefrom resulting is precisely what gives to this section of the movement its delightful dreaminess of character; and, as before said, puts an end to all notion of the entire piece being a minuet.

The two subjects are here shown :—



690. *Melody.*—The melody of the first section is peculiar in some respects. Its note-succession is of Arcadian simplicity, but its construction by no means reveals an equal degree of innocence. A simple melody may be easily provided with luxuriant harmonies at any time, but not to the degree here exhibited. Moreover we do not generally expect simple melodies to lead to enharmonic changes as does this

one. This occurs at bar 20, and is further explained under "Harmony" (q.v.). The melody of the next section derives its soothing character from the divergence of phrasing from bar-subdivision referred to under "Thematic material" (q.v.).

691. *Harmony*.—As above stated, that of the first section is rich, even for Brahms; though this happens without recourse to any but ordinary means. There is, however, an enharmonic change demanding special attention; because it exemplifies the luxuriance of melodic expression which Brahms exhibited in his earliest works, and which was obtained by an uplifting or depression of the melody.\* In this case the latter is employed as the student may perceive from the following example. The upper line shows the phrase with the melodic depression as Brahms harmonised it; the lower line consisting of what it would have been had the melody not been depressed.



692. *Rhythm*.—The only feature of the rhythm is that described under "Thematic material" (q.v.).

693. *Figuration*.—Plain triplet descending arpeggios in ornamentation of crotchet beats of second section. These are arranged for the hands alternately; as may be perceived from the example.

694. *Form*.—A slight fantasia character arises from the peculiar phrasing of the second section. Otherwise the form is simple lyric in two sections, with shortened Da Capo and Codetta.

695. *General characteristics*.—There is a strong tinge of the "ballade" style about this intermezzo, and a distinct affin-

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\* For full explanation of this subject from its various aspects the reader is referred to §§ 107, 109, 136, 137, 124, 125, 146, 203 and 238.



ity with the "più lento" section of Op. 10, No. 4, notwithstanding the elaborate dress of the latter in comparison with these plain chords. Moreover, the change of rhythm for second section is a "narrative" feature; so that the general characteristic is that of "metrical ballad."

## NO. 7. CAPRICCIO.

696. *Key, time and extent.*—In D minor (changing to A minor); "Allegro agitato"; time,  $\frac{2}{4}$  (changing to  $\frac{6}{8}$  and  $\frac{3}{8}$ ); 94 bars in notation, or 116 in performance, with repeats.

697. *Thematic material.*—There is internal evidence of this piece having been written closely after No. 6; not on account of any direct similarity, but through recourse having been had to the same means, in treatment of its second subject. Here the movement is in  $\frac{6}{8}$  time; and, from the second quaver of the very first bar, there commences a series of syncopated crotchets, waging continual warfare with the normal bar-subdivision. Through intricate harmonies, with absolute persistency, it goes; only ceasing with completion of the section; and at arrival of the quasi-cadenza which is to take us back again to the first subject. The latter, for Brahms, is of very ordinary character; nor can it be said that he does much with it. Separately considered, it is about as weak a piece of writing as we shall find; but, having the popular quality of brilliancy, it will never lack admirers. At any rate, the treatment of second subject should atone for all shortcomings.

The two subjects commence as under:—



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698. *Melody.*—That of the first section is monodic; but the melody evolved from the second subject is distinctly two-

voiced, and the merit of delivery must consist in differentiating these two voices artistically.

699. *Harmony*.—The only remarkable harmonies occur during the second part of middle section (bars 29 to 36).

700. *Rhythm*.—The rhythm of the D minor section is severely duple, and therefore calls for no further remark. On the other hand, that of the A minor section is extraordinary. The marvel however does not proceed quite from the source commonly supposed, that, namely, of a love for cross-rhythms, a delight in syncopations and so forth. The previous section had been in  $\frac{2}{4}$ , the trio melody was to be in  $\frac{3}{4}$ ; and the problem was to graft them, as we have seen in other cases. By allowing the accompaniment to be in  $\frac{6}{8}$  the duple bar was preserved; and, in order to preserve its principal accent, the composer's indifference to position of the bar line led him to shift his melody on a quaver, by which means the first note in each bar is struck by the accompaniment alone. It follows that we never get clearly away from the  $\frac{2}{4}$  pulsation (or its equivalent in  $\frac{6}{8}$ ) there is no rhythmic transition in the accompaniment although there is in the melody, and we are made to hover between the two. This is a very different thing from the cause to which these features are mostly attributed.

701. Many have probably played this piece without really knowing what the melody of the A minor section was. It may therefore help the student if it be exhibited here in the shortest form; which will be by grouping the successive crotchets as quavers in an ordinary bar of  $\frac{1}{2}$  time; thus:



704. *General characteristics.*—The peculiarities of the second section have been described under the headings of "Thematic material" and "Rhythm," and may be referred to to explain the *cachet* of the piece. When fluently delivered the effect as a *morceau* is brilliant and pianistic. But it may be doubted whether any listener can adequately appreciate such music who is not armed with a previous knowledge.

## OP. 117. THREE INTERMEZZI.

(*For Pianoforte Solo.*)

THREE ANDANTE MOVEMENTS.

### FIRST INTERMEZZO.

705. *Key, time and extent.*—In E flat (changing to E flat minor); Andante moderato (changing to “più adagio” and “un poco più andante”); time,  $\frac{6}{8}$ ; 57 bars.

706. *Thematic material.*—The inspiration for this piece, like that of the first ballade of Op. 10, is taken from a poem contained in Herder's “*Stimmen der Völker in Liedern*”; and is likewise one which Herder translated from Percy's “*Reliques of Ancient Poetry*” (Vol. II, p. 194); the original title in this case being “*Lady Anne Bothwell's Lament.*”

707. As was remarked in the case referred to it is necessary to the appreciation of Brahms to accept his text in the German collocation. Moreover, it seems to be due to Brahms' usual reserve in such matters that he has only prefixed *one* couplet from the poem to his piece; for he has not only set two complete stanzas of it, but that too in the most realistic manner. He seems thoroughly to have taken to heart the following observation made with regard to the poem by Herder, in a foot-note:

“An expression of true feeling; one almost sees the mother bending over her child's cradle, tracing the father's features in its face, and comforting herself in weeping,”—for the same description might aptly be applied to his music, especially when taken (as it should be) in conjunction with the text.

708. The two stanzas corresponding to the two musical subjects are as follow :

(a) Schlaf sanft mein Kind, schlaf sanft und schön !  
 Mich dauert's sehr, dich weinen sehn,  
 Und schläfst du sanft, bin ich so froh,  
 Und wimmerst du—das schmerzt mich so !  
 Schlaf sanft, du Kleines Mutterherz,  
 Dein Vater macht mir bitterm Schmerz.  
 Schlaf sanft, etc.

(b) Dein Vater, als er zu mir trat  
 Und süß, so süß um Liebe bat,  
 Da kannt' ich noch sein Truggesicht,  
 Noch seine süsse Falschheit nicht,  
 Nun leider ! seh' ich's, seh' ich's ein,  
 Wie nichts wir ihm nun beide sein.  
 Schlaf sanft, etc.\*

709. The characteristic of the first subject is the situation of its melody in the alto; that of the second, its sobbing rhythm. The commencement of each is here shown :



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\* The corresponding text in Percy's "Reliques" as as follows :—

Balow, my babe, lye still and sleipe,  
 It grieves me sair to see thee weipe,  
 If thoust be silent Ise be glad,  
 Thy maining maks my heart ful sad.  
 Balow, my babe, lye still and sleipe,  
 It grieves me sair to see thee weipe.

When he began to court my luv,  
 And with his sugred words to muve,  
 His faynings fals, and flattering cheire,  
 To me that time did not appeire.  
 But now I see most cruell, hee  
 Cares neither for my babe nor mee.

710. *Melody*.—This melody is so universally admired that little need be said. It is of the plaintive Scottish type and has a distinctively “old-time” character which, though it is quite original, makes it at once familiar.

711. *Harmony*.—The harmonies of this piece notwithstanding that they have so rich an effect are really very simple. A false impression is no doubt often produced in consequence of two descriptions of touch being simultaneously required from the right hand throughout.

712. *Rhythm*.—The rhythm of the first section is duple; and, even at that, so plain as to require no remark. That of the “più adagio” has been characterised as “sobbing”; and an attempt will be made to show the reader how completely the expression is justified, by a suggestion of how the words of the poem may be taken as expressed, in the shape of an example.



Dein Vater als er zu mir trat, Und süß's so  
Thy father came with words so dear, so sweet they



süß um Liebe bat, Da Kannst ich noch sein Trugge  
sounded in mine ear, I could not doubt his words of



sich Noch seine süsse Falscheit nicht. Nun—  
love or dream that he so false could prove. Now—

The expression is too natural and pathetic to have happened accidentally, as the reader will perceive by bearing the above ideas in mind as he plays this section.

713. *Form and Figuration*.—The form is lyric and of figuration there is none.

714. *General characteristics*.—Grove has it that this piece is a “deliberate assumption of the style of an old ballad”; and has Brahms’ “favourite device of a melody in an inner

part shrouded as it were with harmonies above as well as below; and his middle part contains instances of his use of an arpeggio with the suggestion of something ominous." Max Vogrich considers this a cradle-song "fit to lull a royal babe to slumber." Huneker calls it a "delicious" cradle-song with a "melody charmingly naïve and childlike."

## SECOND INTERMEZZO.

715. *Key, time and extent.*—In B flat minor; Andante non troppo (changing at conclusion to "più adagio"); time,  $\frac{3}{8}$ ; 86 bars.

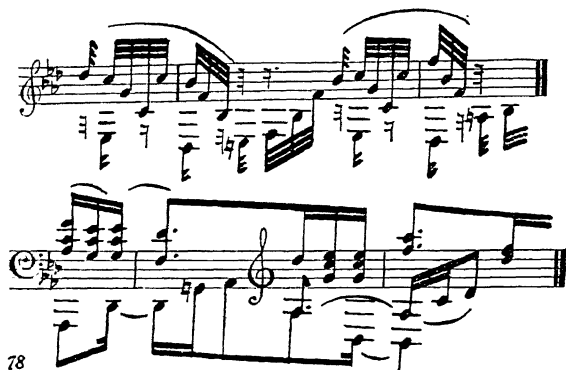
716. *Thematic material.*—It seems strange that those who are fond of tracing in Brahms a resemblance to the works of other composers should have allowed the Mendelssohnianism of this piece to escape. But so it is; and it may be hoped that nothing uncharitable lies in referring to the cause of this silence, as the remarks which follow have only the object of inciting the reader to the study of an interesting question.

717. The reason why this piece provokes no reference to Mendelssohn is that there is no resemblance in *actual notes*. But the actual notes of a composition are only the outward means of conveying to us the composer's ideas, and have precisely the same relation to his conception as the words of an orator have to the propositions he desires to enforce. A mere word-succession could not possibly be held to constitute a resemblance between two speeches conveying totally different ideas. On the other hand the two speeches might be as wide as the poles asunder in point of style: yet if inspired by the same thought they would be identical in conception. It is therefore ridiculous to trace resemblances between composers merely on account of note-successions upon which they may mutually alight; and just as ridiculous to fail to note resemblances in conception merely because the actual notes diverge.\* In this case the conception is Mendelssohnian—not the notes; and the whole piece might (save for peculiarities of technique) be ranged with the "Lieder ohne Worte" without presenting the slightest conflict of ideas, unless the fact of our being obliged to single it out as one of the best were regarded as an

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\* See also No. 3 of this set.

effect of that kind. There are of course the usual two subjects in contrast; the commencements of which are here quoted:



718. *Melody*.—That of the first subject is evolved from the first and last notes of semiquaver groups of four. These are arranged in waving arpeggio style; the “wave” passing over to the left hand during an imaginary sostenuto of the theme, and thereby producing a most graceful effect. The second melody is more dignified and is supported in that character by being very richly harmonised.

719. *Harmony*.—The harmony throughout is exquisite but its full luxuriance is most felt during the second subject where the melody is being delivered in octaves by two middle parts and the harmonies lie both above and below (bars 28 to 38).

720. *Rhythm*.—The rhythm is, in its detail, duple; but that does not sufficiently express its character as a distinct variety of expression is evolved from the contrast of phrases of

$$1 + 1 + 4$$

bar, the overstepping of the two-bar phrase and immediate passage from a phrase of one, to another of four, bars, contributing to the extraordinary richness of effect of the bars quoted under “Harmony.” Notwithstanding the difference in character of the two subjects the rhythm of both is precisely the same.

721. *Figuration*.—The second subject is free of all figur-



ation, in which respect it is pointedly contrasted with the first, in which the arpeggio figure already described is so important that the melody has every appearance of being evolved from it.

722. *Form*.—The form is lyric, in two sections, with the second ultimately treated as coda.

723. *General characteristics*.—The general trait has been described under "Thematic material," and it only remains to refer to impressions. Max Vogrich considers this one of the pieces from which to infer that "Brahms must have experienced much evil in his life."

Huneker submits that, after this, it is impossible to consider Brahms "unpianistic"; though he admits that it is difficult to play in what he calls its "insolent, airy ease."

Fuller-Maitland considers that this number has something of the tender fairy-like melancholy of the slow movement of the Third Symphony.

### THIRD INTERMEZZO.

724. *Key, time and extent*.—In C sharp minor (changing to A); Andante con moto (changing to "poco più lento," "più moto ed espressivo," and concluding with 6 bars of "più lento"); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 110 bars in notation; or 138 in performance, with repeats.

725. *Thematic material*.—In continuation of the remarks made under No. 2 the student should find it interesting to compare this piece with the Intermezzo forming No. 3 of Op. 10, because the two pieces, although in point of actual notes as different from one another as it is possible to be, have a similar basis of inspiration. That is in fact the reason of the "ballade" character of the present number. Like the other intermezzo it starts with the relation of a story—not of hobgoblins this time but an awe-imposing legend—follows on with a dreamy movement (which is the same in conception as the other even although no fairies appear) and winds up—not with an ordinary return—but only stray allusions to the story; as if, on waking up, one proceeded to talk somewhat about it and that were all. The mental picture in each case is absolutely

the same; yet not the slightest outward resemblance can be traced. The two subjects begin as under:



726. *Melody*.—There can be no doubt that if we knew the poetic basis upon which this piece is founded its melody would appear to us even more attractive than it does now. The legendary trait is however so marked in the first subject that it seems to tell its story with perfect plainness even though we may not translate it into words; for there is literally no escape from the awfulness of the cadence occurring with stern regularity at every fifth bar. A good deal of this melody is delivered in unison, though the melodic “fall” alluded to is always harmonised—and gloomily. When at last the melody is clothed in chords it takes refuge in an inner part in accordance with what Fuller-Maitland calls Brahms’ “favourite device.” Favourite it was no doubt; but not in the sense that a mannerism is favourite, for no “upper-part” melody could tell the story with the strange combination of gloom and perfect distinctness here attained. The second melody, with its child-like simplicity, affords us a good view of the discrepancy between “aspect” in notation and *reality of expression*; for, the mere fact of the dreaminess being expressed by anticipating the crotchets by a semitone, gives quite a forbidding aspect to the music; in spite of its baby character, as here shown:



727. *Harmony*.—There is a sort of “masterly inactivity” in the production of some of these harmonic effects. Those of the gloomy cadences for example are principally due to their having been preceded by passages in unison. And, later, when

the story is fully harmonised, a richness ensues quite beyond what is due to the progression; by the mere transference of the melody to an inner part. Then, in the "più moto" section, the mere raising of the melody by a semitone not only induces a dreaminess of expression which was evidently intended, but also begets each time a new harmony—generally that of the minor ninth. The feature does not therefore consist of the harmonies themselves but in the manner of their application.

728. *Rhythm*.—The feature of the rhythm is that, while the piece consistently proceeds in five-bar phrases, they are by no means ordinary phrases, but are composed of five times the single bar; with such a different expression in the last case as to cause demarcation of the phrase. It is as if the narrator were proceeding disjointedly; and, every now and then, pointing the application of what he had, so far, expressed. It is difficult to convey this impression in ordinary words; and recourse will, therefore, be had to a homely poetic illustration; thus:

1 Then forth he came	2 With martial tread
3 Firm was his step	4 Erect his head
5 Victor Galbraith!	

This rhythm governs the entire piece and is evidently that of the poem which Brahms must have had in mind.

729. *Figuration*.—That of the first subject is too slight to require mention. That of the "più moto" is ordinary, *in outline*; but it acquires a peculiar significance in consequence of the melodic anticipations transferring to it the normal accent of the bar. The melodic or superior emphasis is therefore immediately followed by a lesser accent in the figuration.

730. *Form*.—So far as mere “cadre” is concerned the form is lyric; and, under ordinary circumstances there would be an end of the matter. But in this case the refrain marked “poco più lento,” occurring each time at conclusion of the first subject (bars 42 and 109) has the effect of an “envoi”; and shows us a new application of the form by its attachment to the gloomy cadences before referred to; as who should say (with Longfellow):

“Go breathe it in the ear

Of all who doubt and fear.”\*

731. *General characteristics*.—To the Brahms student a main trait of this piece is that it affords much scope for a general view of the master within the course of a few pages, and draws the line between the pianoforte compositions of Brahms and those of any other composer with absolute distinctness—far more pointedly, for example, than was the case with No. 2.

Huneker considers this piece to be made of “sterner stuff” than the others; and adds:

“For me it is most exotic, and has a flavour of the Asiatic in its naked, monophonic ballad-like measures, and evident narrative of sorrowful mien.”

Fuller-Maitland thinks that this number “is clearly suggested by the form of an old ballad, a branch of musical art in which Brahms took an ardent interest throughout his life.”

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\* The music seems to speak these words.

OP. 118. SIX CLAVIERSTÜCKE.  
("PIANOFORTE PIECES.")

NOS. 1, 2, 4 AND 6 ENTITLED "INTERMEZZO."  
No. 3 "BALLADE." No. 5 "ROMANCE."

NO. 1. INTERMEZZO.

732. *Key, time and extent.*—In A minor (finishing major); Allegro non assai, ma molto appassionato; time, alla breve; 44 bars in notation; or 72 in performance, with repeats.

733. *Thematic material.*—As Spitta has observed, "the method of inversion, or derivation of a new melody from the former by reversing the intervals, came to light again for the first time with all its innate musical vitality when Brahms took it up." This feature of composition is only one of a long series of such traits, all reposing solidly upon natural foundations, and no more to be removed by mushroom prejudice than are the mountains themselves. But, for a long time, they had fallen into the wrong hands; and, not without cause, had finally been dubbed mere "Kapellmeister" tricks. It is such an easy step to pass from the contemplation of *abuse* to condemnation of the *thing abused*, that a certain reluctance to believe in the "vitality" to which Spitta alludes may well be pardoned. But Brahms is a far more deadly enemy to Kapellmeister "tricks" than the most vociferous rhapsodist; by showing us, as in the present little piece, how delightfully these methods are capable of being handled; and how, from four notes and their inversion, the "resultant unity" enables him to dive *at once* into his subject, instead of approaching it by a long preamble. Here, within 44 bars, we have, concentrated, every feature of the sonata movement: as the student may readily be trusted to perceive. But his scrutiny will have little value if he neglect to note the means by which this is accomplished.

The "dry-as-dust" scientific composer was habited to parade his artifice. With Brahms it is "Ars est celare artem."

These are the subjects:—



734. *Melody*.—As stated above, and as may be perceived from the example, the melody consists of four notes and their inversion; the recurrences being relieved by interspersions of kindred material.

735. *Harmony*.—This is inherently rich; but again it derives much of its fullness from the melody being doubled by inner parts with harmonies both above and below.

736. *Rhythm*.—It is somewhat singular for a Brahms work, but in this case the rhythm is the only element unpossessed of special interest; even the coda quasi-cadenza being barred and timed to bring it into length with the other sections.

737. *Figuration*.—The plain arpeggio is the only figuration employed.

738. *Form*.—The compression of the form is such that a whole sonata movement may here be traced in miniature; thus—First Section to bar 11; Development, 12 to 21; Return, 22 to 33; Coda, 34 to the end.

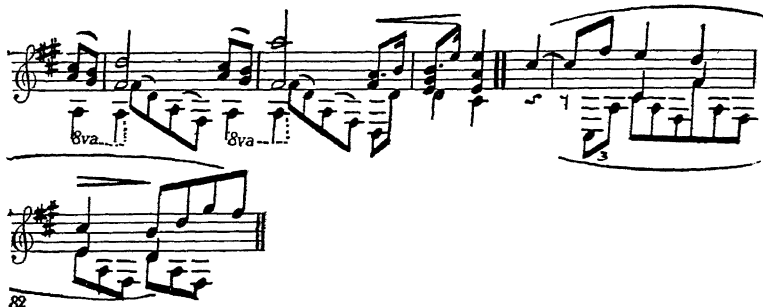
739. *General characteristics*.—It must seem strange to some readers that so few bars can provoke so much comment, or cause enthusiasm; but that only arises from failure to note that it is precisely in the compression of so much into so few bars that the strength of interest lies.

Huneker finds that "this piece starts off in an exultant mood. In it you are glad to breathe the tonic air—to be smothered in the sunshine. Tell me not in mournful numbers that Johannes Brahms cannot be optimistic, cannot hitch his wagon to a star, cannot fight fate. There is passionate intensity and swift motion in this intermezzo. While playing it you are billowed up by the consciousness of power and nobility of soul. The tonality is most diverting and varied.

## NO. 2. INTERMEZZO.

740. *Key, time and extent.*—In A; Andante teneramente (changing to “più lento”); time,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ; 117 bars in notation; or 125 in performance, with repeats.

741. *Thematic material.*—We are here again confronted with a piece of ordinary dimensions abounding in material; and in which the merit consists in so grafting the various portions of this material that it becomes debateable whether, notwithstanding their importance, they may fairly be considered as fresh subjects or not. The whole piece is a mere procession of eight-bar periods which are neither evolved nor contrasted; yet the effects of both evolution and contrast seem to arise from their natural flow. It presents us with another phase of the form of Op. 116, No. 1 (q.v.) in which one subject was made to permeate the whole. But there the means employed was that of selecting portions of the subject for various treatment—that being the application of the principle to an agitated movement. Here the one subject permeates the whole by having grafted to it others which, though different in outward characteristic, are absolutely kindred in feeling—that being the application of the principle to a placid movement. The soothing reposefulness resulting is something indescribably beautiful; and, even should the student find trouble in arriving at its full expression, the difficulty will be even greater to avoid a frequent indulgence in it afterwards. We cannot convey much in a short example; and the following is only offered to enable the reader to identify two leading periods.



742. *Melody*.—The above shows merely the commencement of two of the eight-bar periods of which there are seven in all, all equally and truly melodic. The melodic beauty nevertheless principally consists in the happy continuous flow which the whole presents.

743. *Harmony*.—The most remarkable progression is that of the third of the middle periods, commencing at bar 58, and marked "*più lento*"; in which Brahms' care to make the reading easy seems rather to have made it more difficult.



instead of



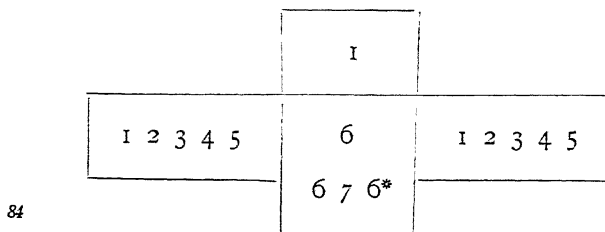
The beauty of the canons commencing at bars 50 and 66 must also not be overlooked.

744. *Rhythm*.—The rhythm is strictly duple, all the periods, except one, being adjusted to eight-bar length. The pulsation varies from crotchet, usually, to minim, exceptionally. Though there is no quaver pulsation the normal quaver acquires an increased value when set against triplets (bar 50, etc.).

745. *Figuration*.—The subordinate rhythmic motion throughout being that of the quaver (of either half or third the crotchet value) the figuration varies between mere dispersion of the beat, or slight undulations representing it. The latter is delightfully reserved for the periods in which two quavers are set against three.

746. *Form*.—Nothing could by any possibility exceed the simplicity of this piece in construction, considering that it is a mere succession of eight-bar periods; of which only one is extended by four bars, that being immediately before the return-groups. It will therefore serve to exhibit Brahms' art within these microscopic bounds. There are seven periods in all, and this is their arrangement:—





which shows that the middle groups are a reflex of the entire composition. The above shows 15 times 8 bars, with 4-bar extension at \*, and 1 initial; or 125 bars the full extent of the piece.

747. *General characteristics.*—The reader will have already gathered that this piece is a model of musical emotional expression without recourse to climax; or, in other words, without any rise and fall of tone volume, of pitch, of harmony as represented by intensity—and of movement, as represented by increase or decrease of speed. The sentiment in this case is of an entirely pleasurable kind; but it is all upon *one emotional level*; in which respect, it has its counterpart in No. 6 of Op. 76. Pieces of this description will never obtain from the crowd the appreciation which is their due; for the reason that the latter are so continually led to believe that emotion is only present in the larger waves of excitement; to the exclusion of those slighter variations which are more truly expressive of homely feelings.

### NO. 3. BALLADE.

748. *Key, time and extent.*—In G minor (changing to B); Allegro energico; time, allabreve; 118 bars.

749. *Thematic material.*—"Die herrliche Ballade," said Herzogenberg in his letter to Brahms of February 14, 1894; and he was right. As an intimate friend of Brahms, too, he may have known the poetical basis of the piece; and, if so, it is a pity he did not reveal it. But, since it remains unknown, we may, on the principle of converting necessity into a virtue, usefully do our best to unravel the mystery; and we shall be risking little if, in this spirit, we assume that the story upon

which this ballade is founded hails from the North, that it relates to noble deeds, and that the characters in it are courtly. We can also discern that the two subjects are a masculine and feminine; this being abundantly shown not only by the change of rhythm but by the sudden disappearance of archaic harmonies. But what these courtly dames may have had to propound in reply to the defiant phrases of their sires, it is not given to us to unravel; and herein is the whole problem of what music should or should not be, brought directly under our notice. Why should we be able to trace some facts and not others? Why should we feel, for example, that these are horsemen? And what is there in the music which indicates exactly where they alight and where the ladies come to meet them; and which tells us also that they are anxious to be off again—that they start—that the dames look lingeringly until the hoof-sounds die away in the distance and then return.

750. The question is vast, but it involves no mystery; for the signification attached to sound, whether tonal or articulate, is all a question of associations; and it is not in the interest of music that those associations should be unduly extended. In this Ballade of Brahms we may consider the limit of what is desirable to have been reached; and, leaving the student to trace for himself the various episodes recorded above, we now quote the commencement of each subject.



751. *Melody*.—The melody like everything which attaches to this piece is heroic, and the melodic contrast of masculine and feminine expression between the two sections may well be cited as one of the best examples extant.

752. *Harmony*.—The archaic feature is strongly present in the first section and then suddenly disappears; with poetic intention as above explained.

753. *Rhythm*.—The phrases are in pointed expression of some such verse as our heroic pentameter; say, with salutatory expression, as—

God bless your grace  
 ♪ | ♪. ♪ | ♪.  
 with wealth and happy days!  
 ♪ | ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ | ♪

or, interrogative, as—

How now? fair lords,  
 ♪ | ♪. ♪ | ♪.  
 What fare? What news abroad?  
 ♪ | ♪ ♪ | ♪ | ♪ | ♪

or, narrative; or any other variety; the above being merely in explanation of the five-bar rhythm. This, in accordance with all previous explanations, disappears at entrance of the new section.

754. *Figuration*.—Practically none.

755. *Form*.—This, although lyric in outline, and generally of simple construction, is exemplary in respect of the arrangement of its periods; as the reader may judge from a tabular exposition.

Sections	OPENING SECTION	MIDDLE SECTION				CONCLUDING SECTION
Periods	10 12 10*	8	8	8	8	10 12 10
Remarks	*With 8 extension to join to second subject		With 4 bars of No. 1 worked in		With 4 bars of No. 1 added	With 8 extension as as Codetta to conclude

756. *General characteristics*.—No one can ever truly enjoy this ballade who has not the technical equipment necessary for playing its many chords with all the freedom and facility of single notes. This observation is intended to be equally useful to others, however, as affording an insight to the manner in which the piece should be delivered. Any hesitation in attack or want of fluency in delivery would be fatal. This is, as

Huneker says, a "right royal ballade" and should be played in a right royal way—or else not judged at all.

## NO. 4. INTERMEZZO.

757. *Key, time and extent.*—In F minor; Allegretto un poco agitato; time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 134 bars.

758. *Thematic material.*—For once at all events we may admit that Brahms' *penchant* for the scientific has brought him dangerously near to the committal of "Kapellmeister" peccadilloes. The canon of this movement may be clever, but it does not appeal; being far better to look at than to listen to. Certainly, it produces some interesting features (it would be strange indeed if that were not so); but, on the whole, this piece cannot be held to compare worthily with its companions. The two subjects commence as under:—



759. *Melody.*—Of true melodic flow there is in this piece very little. Even such melody as may be seems stilted; on account of the canon necessitating for it an undue attention. The melody gains by being made to proceed from the under-part. See "Characteristics."

760. *Harmony.*—That of the first section calls for no remark; but, the way in which the progressions favour the canon in the second section; the modulation to E and return to the key; as well as the automatic provision of basses, through the necessity of answering wide intervals in the melody; all this is well worthy of, and no doubt will duly receive, attention at the hands of every player who regards his own progress.

761. *Rhythm.*—The rhythm consists entirely of eight-bar phrases of duple construction subject to occasional trifling extensions for obvious purposes, but the opening phrase of the

first section is of only four bars, unless the player choose to scan it as twelve in combination with the next phrase. The canon necessitates that the demarcation of phrases should be distinct; and this is best accomplished by a slight "rubato" of the joining bars—that is by giving more time to the first, less to the second, but the same on average. This requires to be done with great delicacy and discrimination; for rather than risk exaggeration it had better be left alone altogether.

762. *Figuration*.—None.

763. *Form*.—The form is lyric in two sections, but with considerable modification of the first section on repeat; in the direction of prominence of the tonic harmony and the evolution of codetta.

764. *General characteristics*.—There are reasons for the non-effect of this piece, which we cannot suppose Brahms to have been unmindful of; but which he probably regarded as outweighed by novelty of feature. The conception of a canon at single beat distance is attractive to the musician—but to him alone; the response at such close quarters being entirely lost upon the ordinary listener. In order to make the most of it, the player is advised to consider the melody of the piece to lie in the tenor; and to treat the upper part as a gentle anticipation. By this means, not only the strong beat will be ensured for it; but also a prominence for the part most likely to become obscured.

Huneker considers this piece to have "a savour of the rococo, with its gentle theme and response. Something of the Old World hovers in its rustling bars, especially in the man-agement of the basses during the second part.

## NO. 5. ROMANCE.

765. *Key, time and extent*.—In F (changing to D); Andante (changing to Allegretto grazioso); time,  $\frac{6}{4}$  (changing to allabreve); 58 bars.

766. *Thematic material*.—It would probably be held ungracious to demur to the title which Brahms has assigned to this piece,\* but it would be as thankless to attempt to reconcile its thematic material with the ordinary conception of a

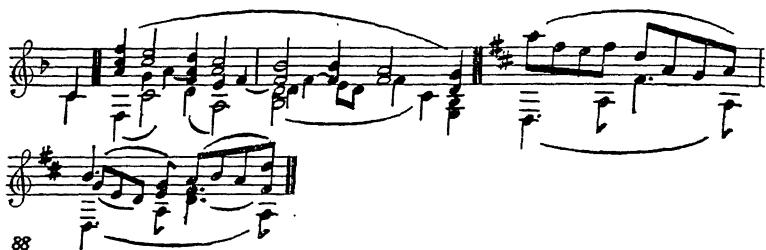
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\* See Op. 116, No. 3, as to the naming of the Brahms pieces.

"Romance." The only course, therefore, is to leave the title-question open; and, for the sake of clearness, to treat the composition as an "Idyll"; which is what it decidedly appears to be.

767. Considered in this light its description is much simplified. The first subject seems so to breathe the open air, that it almost claims to be described in terms which do the same; for its lovely "part-song" has no suggestion of illuminated halls; but seeks rather the shade of the greenwood tree. And the village-dance to which its last bar so lovingly invites us (and which consists of a miniature chaconne) has a rural flavour which does but strengthen the same impression. Altogether, therefore, let us be thankful for enjoyment received, by whatever name it may be called.

These are the openings:—



768. *Melody*.—This is of thoroughly pastoral character, with a mediæval tinge in consequence of the employment of old-time harmonies and forms. It should not escape the student that the melody of the Chaconne is derived from that of the opening section.

769. *Harmony*.—This has been already referred to above; the only remaining necessary point being the "musette" effect of the pedal bass in the Chaconne.

770. *Rhythm*.—There is no departure from the strictly duple phrase; except for three bars, as the  $\frac{6}{4}$  time is resumed.

771. *Figuration*.—The melodic inflections of the Chaconne (from bar 18) may be described as figurations of their kind.

772. *Form*.—The form is lyric, subject to certain modifications described under the next heading.

773. *General characteristics*.—This is another of the pieces

attaining to an extra richness in consequence of the situation of the melody in the inner parts. But, in other respects, it is more suitably compared with No. 2 of Op. 119 (q.v.) on account of the relation of both to the Chaconne; and, specially, in respect of the salient discord between the settings, of the latter of which in the present number there are six. The bell-like character of the fourth of these settings (at bar 30) is an effect which Brahms has again used in Op. 119, No. 1 (q.v.). The weakest points presented are the passages which re-introduce the first subject and the shortness of the last section. The latter however is often lengthened by prefixing to it the first eight bars of the opening, without this being construed as an undue liberty.

## NO. 6. INTERMEZZO.

774. *Key, time and extent.*—In E flat minor; Andante largo e mesto (lento at final cadence); time,  $\frac{3}{8}$ ; 84 bars.

775. *Thematic material.*—This is a movement portraying the utmost grief and passion; without employing that end any of those unusual resources of power which this composer held so much in favour. There is no bending of the form to his will; nothing (except, maybe, a highly refined pianism) to point peculiarly to Brahms. But, between the Spartan simplicity of the first subject, and the turbulent elaboration set against it, there is such a violence of contrast, that the former acquires an unwonted intensity merely by force of it. Had Brahms been given to literary endeavour, after the style of Wagner, what precepts should we not have heard? But, in default of that, it devolves upon the student to reduce to precept what the master has taught us by example; and in this case the lesson is unmistakably as to the *production of intensity of expression from the association of extremes*. For, not only is a painfully sad reiteration of three notes (delivered in the plainest way) set against a highly wrought and passionately unruly accompaniment; but it is sometimes left entirely alone, and at others it breathes itself out under cover of a mere monotone. Then, again, whilst the first subject is so beset by sorrow that it constantly repeats the same woeful plaint the second knows absolutely no restraint. A spasmodic resolution has been

called to aid; and the grief is, even riotously, to be set aside. But, as the Italian proverb has it:

“Chi troppo ride ha duole al cuore”—

and lo! the grief, all unbidden, suddenly returns. There can be nothing more human than this; and the case may well be recommended to the consideration of those who think that Brahms has no emotion. As the elaborations would require too much space the following example is merely of the *melody* of the subjects.



776. *Melody*.—The effect of the melody lies, in this case, in the sparseness of it; a disconsolate reiteration being the object in view.

777. *Harmony*.—The double suspension figures rather largely in this piece; besides which there is, generally speaking, a very free use of discord. The monotone of the upper part (bars 17 to 20) should also be observed.

778. *Rhythm*.—The principal rhythmic feature is the singular management of phrases during the middle section. The extension and grafting which here take place can only be held indicative of the unsettled feeling which this portion of the composition portrays.

779. *Figuration*.—This is extremely elaborate and proves what Brahms could do in this line when he chose. The figures are mostly unconventional.

780. *Form*.—The form is lyric, but with diminished proportions of the middle section in favour of greater prominence for the plaint giving character to the piece.

781. *General characteristics*.—These are involved in the foregoing explanation; for which reason impressions may now be quoted:—

Fuller-Maitland's opinion is: "A wonderful instance of condensed tragedy; the arpeggio figure being used with unmistakable emotional purpose."

Erb describes this number as "perhaps the most eloquent expression of the tragic in all pianoforte music."



OP. 119. FOUR CLAVIERSTÜCKE.  
(PIANOFORTE PIECES.)

Nos. 1, 2 AND 3 ENTITLED "INTERMEZZO." NO. 4 ENTITLED "RHAPSODY."

NO. 1. INTERMEZZO.

782. *Key, time and extent.*—In B minor; Adagio; time,  $\frac{3}{8}$ ; 67 bars.

783. *Thematic material.*—In the first of the two subjects which this piece includes Brahms seems to have had a chiming effect in view. This is not so much attributed to the toppling thirds of the accompaniment as to the fact that many of these notes are made to sustain; as bells might do, for a short while. The form of figuration exceeds the subject itself in interest and is reproduced with fine effect during seven successive bars at the return. The whole piece, though not so important as No. 2 of Op. 118, is of the same kind; its second subject being grafted to the first in the same way as then happened. The reader is therefore referred to the explanations already given for information upon this question. The two subjects commence as here shown:—



784. *Melody.*—The melody of this number certainly has a most exquisite effect; but whether, on that account, it would be safe to describe it as a beautiful melody, is dubious. It owes so much to other sources—not to harmony alone, but to the nature of the figure by which it is accompanied, and to the flow of inner parts—that it is natural to attribute to it a

greater beauty than it could be said to possess separately. What is more to the point is that it is of fervent expression, and fulfils everything required of it in course of the piece.

785. *Harmony*.—There is no special feature attaching to the progressions themselves; but it will benefit the student to observe certain situations where intense harmony is produced by the melodic flow of inner parts. The ascending flow of the "bell" figure to return to theme (bar 43) is also worthy of notice.

786. *Rhythm*.—That of the first section is duple and regular, but there are some elisions in the second, which the student would do well to note—if only for the reason that they influence phrasing in performance.

787. *Figuration*.—The bell-like figure already alluded to and a few plain dispersions are all that occur under this head.

788. *Form*.—The form is lyric, in two subjects, the second being developed into the return; and the return groups being modified in favour of a Codetta reminiscent of second subject, and in diminuendo.

789. *General characteristics*.—A cachet is given to this piece by the bell-like figure of accompaniment with which it opens. This instead of being continuous appears and disappears quite suddenly; as if the poetic occasion of the piece were one in which the window were suddenly opened revealing a sound of distant chimes. Otherwise the characteristics are simply those of a noble slow movement possessing the rare charm of a sufficient without an over-development.

Huneker describes this adagio as full of reverent, sedate music, and deeply moving; adding: "Since Beethoven no one can vie with Brahms in writing a slow sober movement: one in which the man, moral, intellectual and physical, girds up his loins, conserves his forces, and says his greatest and noblest. The sustained gravity, the profound feeling, never mellows into the pathetic fallacy; and of the academic there is not a trace."

## NO. 2. INTERMEZZO.

790. *Key, time and extent*.—In E minor (changing to E major); Andantino un poco agitato (changing to Andantino grazioso); time,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ; 107 bars in notation; or 122 in performance, with repeats.

791. *Thematic material*.—This piece is a remarkable sample of Brahms' art in modifying ancient forms to his own purposes. Already in the Romance of Op. 118 we have had a specimen of the Chaconne in miniature, and one in which the chord of the second was used as a salient division to the settings. The old-time principle of the Chaconne was that reminders of the theme were to consist of accurate reproduction of all its *accentuations*; from which it follows that nothing could be so effective as the provision of an extraordinary emphasis at the theme-end, because such emphasis would not only continually require to be reproduced as such, but, in virtue of its position, would also serve to divide the settings, and thus make the outline of the entire composition clear, in spite of any elaboration which might ensue. It is a bold conception however to make this final emphasis a discord, and still bolder to make it one of ultra-modern type. Yet, when the principle of final emphasis is once admitted, then, as the continuity of the Chaconne is an important individual feature, it follows that the more intense the discord the more relieved we are of the necessity of any cadence until the end.

792. But it is even more instructive to observe how this works out. In the old time it was necessary not only that the theme should be short (for that would be advisable under any circumstances) but also that each setting of it should be of precisely the same length; for otherwise the listeners would have had but a sorry chance of discovering their whereabouts the moment the elaborations set in. This naturally gave to the form a mechanical aspect; and although it does not lie in the nature of things to trace the cause of such effects with accuracy, there can be little doubt that this mechanical feature has had largely to do with the neglect into which the Chaconne as an art-form has fallen.

793. It is at this stage that we are able to appreciate the value of the innovation alluded to above; for, with an intense discord to point the divisions, so obvious a landmark was set up that all danger of confusion was at an end; and the composer found himself at liberty to throw an increased freedom and grace into his work, without sacrificing any essentials of the old form.

794. It is in this way that a worker like Brahms has conferred upon the art of music benefits which are not yet realised, simply because it was not given to him to preach his principles

from the house-tops. Slowly, but surely, the knowledge of them gains ground, however; and, in corresponding measure, his fame increases. In the present piece there would have been but one subject, had not Brahms also lyricised the form by introducing a middle section. But even in this he has been true in spirit to the form of the Chaconne; by evolving the new subject from the old, as the following will show :



795. *Melody*.—From the chaconne-like character of the piece it follows that not much requires to be said under the head of melody; what there is being confined to the lyric feature just alluded to. By means of this, Brahms instituted a ready means of securing unity of purpose between two apparently dissimilar movements; and that his survivors do not disdain to copy him is shown by the sincere flattery of Elgar in the slow movement of his First Symphony; the material for which is evolved from the previous allegro in just the same way.

796. *Harmony*.—Apart from the discord which forms the rallying-point of the Chaconne, there is nothing calling for special remark.

797. *Rhythm*.—The rhythm of the Chaconne portion is, of course, that of its theme as shown in the example. The middle section is in eight-bar sentences.

798. *Figuration*.—As in Op. 118, No. 5, the Chaconne changes constitute figuration in the broad sense of working designs; but this signification is altogether superior to what is intended to be implied by the term.

799. *Form.*—Combined Chaconne and lyric.

800. *General characteristics.*—The leading trait is the gentle swing of the  $\frac{6}{8}$  bar, which reminds some people of the walse. Thus, Fuller-Maitland considers that "this piece, with its surprising change of thematic aspect, tells of Brahms' well-known love of the waltz form, as treated by Strauss."

### NO. 3. INTERMEZZO.

801. *Key, time and extent.*—In C; Grazioso e giocoso; time,  $\frac{6}{8}$ ; 70 bars.

802. *Thematic material.*—The reader is probably aware of the charming effect obtained in the Cradle-song (Op. 117, No. 1) by placing the principal melody in the alto, with parts above and below it; and such is also the prime feature of the present Intermezzo. To the ordinary observer it contains but one subject, which, by the aid of some of the most delicious modulations ever penned, completely sustains the interest. But there also appears, fugitively at the seventh bar, a slight tenor figure; which, disappearing and recurring at intervals, finally assumes the rôle of melody in a long ascending sequence leading to the climax at bar 55, and may therefore be said to introduce us to a new design. The principal subject is here shown; and the student is invited to compare it with that of Op. 118, No. 6.



803. *Melody.*—This is really composed of the three notes E, G and A just as they may be observed in the lower notes of the right hand part in the above example. As the expression of this piece is precisely the contrary of that of Op. 118, No. 6 (the principal subject of which was also upon three notes) the student has here an opportunity of contrasting similar means with opposite treatments.

804. *Harmony.*—For a piece of such small dimensions the

modulation is considerable, as may be inferred from the fact that, having started in C, an enharmonic change becomes necessary at the twenty-ninth bar. The way in which the extreme keys are approached and quitted is an interesting study, as showing that it is not the amount of travel which constitutes an excess of modulation.

805. *Rhythm*.—The happiness of the piece is beautifully displayed by the playful and unthinking manner in which the phrases knit. The phrase-sense is so faint that, although the opening is presumably in groups of four bars, there is nothing to impede its being construed as in three-bar phrases. The lightness of rhythmical demarcation is felt throughout; as, for example, at bar 41, where the augmentation seems simply like a wayward delaying of the theme. Altogether this number is a study in pale rhythmical outline.

806. *Figuration*.—None.

807. *Form*.—The design of the piece has been alluded to under "Thematic material"; but its special bearing upon form lies in the secrecy of method displayed in the introduction of a subordinate figure (bar 7) having all the appearance of an accompaniment; and, by playing upon it at intervals, in securing for it the same kind of acceptance as usually follows only after a formal statement.

808. *General characteristics*.—The trend of the piece is the expression of a wayward happiness; and the nonchalance of its melody, by continually playing upon a few notes, seems to indicate, when contrasted with No. 6 of Op. 118, that such reiteration was Brahms' method of describing a fixed condition of mind. The difference of treatment shows itself in the capricious *sforzandos* to which the melody is here subject; and largely, of course, in the rhythmical movement, which is one particularly expressive of a "dolce far mente" form of happiness.

Huneker's remarks upon this Intermezzo are as follows: "Fancy the gayest, blithest intermezzo marked 'joyfully' and you will hear the enchanting one in C. The theme is in the middle voice, and the elasticity, sweetness and freedom throughout are simply delightful. It is three pages of undefiled happiness, and only to be compared to that wonderful rhythmical Study in A flat by Chopin, the supplementary study in the Fétis method. But Chopin is so sad and Brahms so merry, yet the general architectonic is not dissimilar."

Fuller-Maitland considers that "this exquisitely dainty little piece is as characteristic of the master's tenderness as the following Rhapsody is of his vigour."

#### NO. 4. RHAPSODY.

809. *Key, time and extent.*—In E flat (changing to A flat); allegro risoluto; time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 262 bars.

810. *Thematic material.*—The Brahms conception of the "Rhapsody" was evidently something differing from the ordinary; and the trait of the epic ballad—so marked in each of the other two specimens—is even more strongly present in the one before us; the latter going so far as to remind us, in its second subject, of the tragedy of Op. 10, No. 1.\* It is true that the melodious grace of the present third subject offers much relief, but the position of this subject is merely subordinate; whilst the defiant character of the first subject, with its martellato rhythm, places it beyond doubt that it is with a deliberately penned "heroic rhapsody" that we have to deal. The three subjects commence as under:



811. *Melody.*—The melody of the first subject is scarcely to be judged by the ordinary standard; or, at all events, if so judged it should be after deduction of the three "knocks" with which each five-bar phrase concludes. The fact is that with regard to this piece we are at a disadvantage; and, not know-

\* Compare bars 65 and following; also 133 and following with the opening of Op. 10, No. 1.

ing its meaning, feel it to be dangerous to take a purely technical view. Its first subject has the appearance of having been constructed for heavy polyphonic working; yet not a trace of anything of the kind is to be met. The second subject (bar 65) is certainly the reverse of melodious in the ordinary sense. It seems to advance cautiously by measured steps and then (bar 68) suddenly turn away in horror. This might perhaps help us to explain the "knocks" of the previous subject, but for the fact that the third subject is as melodious, graceful and happy as the others were lugubrious and threatening.

812. *Harmony*.—The ruthless manner in which the first subject is allowed to modulate, coupled with the latter's rhythm, seems to betoken the devil-may-care strut of a swash-buckler soldiery, and the fact of the latter halting every now and then in order to give three knocks is apt to make us very curious as to what it all may mean. The harmonic progressions are old; but without their archaism being very pronounced.

813. *Rhythm*.—Apart from the prevailing five-bar phrase of the first subject, the third presents us with the interesting feature of a division of 8 bars into 3 and 5; the rhythm from bar 93 (change of key) being 3, 5; 3, 5; 4, 4; 3, 5; and 4, 4.

814. *Figuration*.—None requiring mention.

815. *Form*.—Lyric, with three subjects and coda; with slight modification of the original groups on return.

816. *General characteristics*.—The general trait is that this piece is too heavy for the piano. It has not the appearance of having been designed for the instrument. There is also some meaning to be attached to it of which we are unaware; and its effect is by no means commensurate with difficulty.

Huneker says of this Rhapsody that it is Schumannish. He looks upon it as a return of Brahms to his early love; and accepts the opening as echoes of the march of the "Davidsbündler." Of the last pieces generally he finds that "there is no falling off in inspiration or workmanship, the idea and its expression being woven in one strand."



## PART III.

### (C) SUPPLEMENT.

#### WORKS WITHOUT OPUS NUMBER OR POSTHUMOUS.

#### THE 51 EXERCISES (UEBUNGEN).

817. These exercises might, quite feasibly, be described as the "88"; for the reason that there are thirty-seven extra exercises, appearing in the guise of offshoots from the principal numbers; but which, as material for practice, are quite distinct. It may be hoped however that this suggestion will not be considered as falling into line with that of Max Vogrich, who thought that the collection should be called "A Hospital for Disabled Virtuosi"; as it is designed only to apprise the reader of the amount of technical matter which lies here at his disposal, and which—of its kind at least—amounts to a complete school.

818. Opinion must necessarily very widely differ upon the question of such exercises;—and not only upon their general question, but upon that also of their distinct relation to the composer. Some of the indicated fingering scarcely suggests his manner of performance; and, as he was in the habit of making concessions to the player in the course of his works, it seems even more natural that he should do so in this case, where sacrifice of effect could barely enter into the question.

819. But however this case may be, there is no doubt that the passage-formations upon which the exercises are based are characteristic of the composer. Fuller-Maitland in Grove considers that:

“ They show how very prominent a place the development of what may be called the intellectual independence of finger held in the esteem of the composer throughout his life; and it is as often required in his later works as in his earlier.”

820. The particular numbers in which the cultivation of such independence seems most in view are 1 (a to f), 7a, 12 to 14, 18 (a, b), 25 (a to c), 30, 33 (a, b), 34 (a to c), 35, 40 (a, b), 41 (a, b) and 50; although of course all the exercises are more or less serviceable in this respect. Huneker finds that they are “ little gold mines,” as a preparation for Brahms’ own works; but the praise which he accords to them in respect of being more “ musical than Tausig ” does not seem very alluring. Truth to tell, they are *not* musical (what exercises can be?); and their only *raison d’être* is technical improvement; as is also that of every collection of exercises yet written. No doubt in this respect they are well justified; and it might in all probability be productive of great technical benefit to practise, say, Nos. 5 and 29. But how much better to practise Variations 9 and 11 of Op. 35, Book II; which are precisely the same thing—only with an added poetry and meaning? But these are questions for the individual to settle; and, not being proper subjects for general decree—either for or against—need not be enlarged upon.

821. The following is a concise description of each exercise for the reader’s guidance.

No. 1. (a) and (b) mixed groups of 3 and 4; (c) and (d) mixed groups of 4 and 5; (e) and (f) mixed groups of 6 and 7; all in contrary motion.

No. 2. Scale passages in thirds for the hands alternately, (a) ascending passages, (b) descending passages.

No. 3. Ascending and descending scale sections for the hands combined.

No. 4. Preparatory study for scale in sixths. The sixths are detached and very rapidly dispersed.

No. 5. Dispersed octaves in scale progressions, but with the octave changing for each note, (a) another form.

No. 6. Dispersed octaves in arpeggio progressions, but with the octave changing for each note, (a) another form.

No. 7. Five-finger chromatic passages, (a) another form.

No. 8. Mixed arpeggios, (a) another form.

No. 9. Arpeggio dispersions extending from third to tenth, (b) another form.

No. 10. Mixed arpeggios within the octave, with holding note.

No. 11. Further mixed arpeggios within the octave, with holding note.

No. 12. Harmonised chromatic ascending sequence, with holding notes, and free part in continuous semiquavers.

No. 13. Harmonised chromatic descending sequence, with holding notes, and free part in continuous semiquavers.

No. 14. Another form of harmonised descending sequence, with holding notes and free part in continuous quavers.

No. 15. Arpeggios within the octave, with holding note. For the two hands in contrary motion.

No. 16. Another form of arpeggios similar to those of Ex. 15, (b) and (c) other forms of the same.

No. 17. Preparatory shake exercise for the hands alternately.

No. 18. Shake and progression combined with holding note, (b) another form.

No. 19. Mixed double-note exercise.

No. 20. Broken arpeggio passages within the octave, and with change of octave for each group. For the hands combined.

No. 21. Mixed arpeggio and double-note exercise in elaborated scale form. Tenth positions, (b) another form.

No. 22. Double-note exercise in elaborated scale form.

No. 23. Double-note exercise in elaborated scale form with holding note, (b) another form, (c) another form.

No. 24. The same description of exercise with greater elaboration, (b) another form.

No. 25. Sustained octaves, with a chromatic inner-part for each hand, (b) and (c) other forms.

No. 26. Broken arpeggio passage within the octave, contrary motion, (b) and (c) other forms.

No. 27. The same description of passage, but including repeated notes.

No. 28. Chromatic scale passages in contrary motion, with holding note.

No. 29. Repeated octaves with intermediate single-note.

No. 30. Shake exercise, with moving inner parts.

No. 31. Broken arpeggios within the octave with mixed single and double-notes, (b) another form.

No. 32. Quaver melody, with subordinate part in demisemiquavers for each hand.

No. 33. Contrary progression passage, combining mixed single and double notes, (b) another form.

No. 34. Melody and triplet accompaniment for each hand, (b) and (c) other forms of the same.

No. 35. Melody and semiquaver accompaniment for each hand. Melody either in crotchets or quavers.

No. 36. Broken arpeggio passage within the octave in contrary motion.

No. 37. Broken arpeggio passages in highly extended position, contrary motion, (b) another form.

No. 38. Repeated chords with intermediate single notes.

No. 39. The turn; with simultaneous holding double-note.

No. 40. Broken arpeggios within the octave in contrary motion, (b) another form.

No. 41. Same description of exercise, (b) another form.

No. 42. Same description of exercise, (b) another form.

No. 43. Change of hand-position during holding note, (b) another form.

No. 44. Dispersed arpeggios in elaborated scale form, rising and falling beyond the octave, (b) another form.

No. 45. The appoggiatura applied to the third with simultaneous holding-note.

No. 46. Chords and simultaneous holding note, (b) another form.

No. 47. Arpeggio rising and falling passage with interspersed chromatics.

No. 48. Alternate sostenuto and moving upper and lower parts for either hand.

No. 49. The same description of exercise, (b) another form.

No. 50. Short exercise marked for repetition with eight various treatment.

No. 51. Rising and falling passage composed of repeated notes with scale and arpeggio sections; contrary motion.

## FIVE STUDIES ARRANGED FROM THE WORKS OF OTHER COMPOSERS.

### NO. 1. CHOPIN STUDY.

822. *Key, time and extent.*—In F minor; poco presto; time, allabreve (represented by a bar-subdivision of  $\frac{1}{8}$  in right hand and  $\frac{9}{4}$  in left); 88 bars.

823. *Description.*—This piece consists simply of a right hand double-note arrangement of the Chopin Study, No. 2, from the second collection of twelve, Op. 25. Chopin's indication of the movement is  $\text{♩} = 112$ ; but Brahms has prefixed "poco" to the "presto" of the original, apparently in consideration of the double notes, which form a continuous series of thirds or sixths, and are naturally more difficult than the single notes of the original.

824. The arrangement leaves the Chopin bass intact; so that Brahms' share in the matter is entirely restricted to the provision of double notes for the upper part. This is, of course, simply what any ordinary musician might have done; and it cannot be said to entitle this piece to be considered a Brahms study. It was published as early as 1869; and, therefore, must belong to Brahms' enthusiastic student days, when he delighted in playing everything in "different ways" to his master, Marxsen. We are expressly told that he did this with the Weber Rondo, also published in 1869; besides which what Brahms then told his master was "another way" remained a habit with him throughout his life, as shown by the many instances of two works of one class being produced in quick succession. The reader will find abundant evidence of the "other way" proclivity to which this arrangement is due by referring to the "Fifty-one Uebungen," Nos. 5-9, 14, 16, 18, 21, 23-26, 31, 33-4, 37, 40-44, 46 and 49.

## NO. 2. WEBER RONDO.

825. *Key, time and extent.*—In C; presto; time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 332 bars.

826. *Description.*—This piece consists of an inversion of the parts for right and left hands in the Finale to the first of Weber's four Sonatas, Op. 24. In it the arduous "perpetual motion" of the right hand part of the original is assigned to the left; and vice versa, inducing some rather eccentric relations between them. The original degree of movement (presto  $\frac{1}{2}$  = 80) is preserved, showing that Brahms considers no concession to the left hand necessary in respect of speed.

827. The inversion of parts has rendered considerable departures from the original note-succession of the "perpetual motion" necessary; and it cannot be said that these are very happily managed, or that the effect of Weber's movement is otherwise than changed for the worse. The style is immature; and probably the mere fact of the piece having a technical aim accounts for its being included with the Brahms works, a privilege to which it is not entitled by any inherent quality.

828. At a very early age Brahms held the position of accompanist at concerts given in the Stadttheater at Hamburg. During that time he was very busy with compositions and arrangements; and it is known that some of the light effusions of this period were published by Cranz, under the name of "G. W. Marks"—though we are not told how this unpromising cognomen was arrived at. Most lovers of Brahms will feel regret that "G. W. Marks" was not also allowed to father this arrangement.

## NO. 3. PRESTO FROM J. S. BACH.

## (FIRST ARRANGEMENT.)

829. *Key, time and extent.*—In G minor (notation in one flat); presto; time,  $\frac{3}{8}$ ; 136 bars in notation; or 272 bars in performance with repeats.

830. *Description.*—This Presto is taken from Bach's G minor Sonata for solo violin. The piece is a "moto perpetuo" consisting of single notes for each hand; the passages being

formed of broken chords and scale sections and being individually easy but difficult in succession on account of the erratic fantasia-like order of progression. Contrary motion and crossing of hands are of frequent occurrence.

831. The study is a most useful one and lends itself appropriately to almost endless varieties of phrasing. Beginning with pure staccato, and gradually introducing varieties of legato (after the manner of Kreutzer's Violin Study No. 2) will convert this piece into a whole series of exercises, which the intelligent student should especially value as the sterling character of the music enables them to be practised for a length of time without mental fatigue.

We scarcely require to be told that this arrangement dates from a later period; but it amusingly confirms the "other-way" proclivity alluded to under the head of the Chopin Study (q.v.) as in this case there are two piano settings of the same Bach movement.

#### NO. 4. PRESTO FROM J. S. BACH.

##### (SECOND ARRANGEMENT.)

832. *Key, time and extent.*—The same as for first arrangement (q.v.).

833. *Description.*—This piece is from the same Bach original as No. 3, and therefore the same description applies. The principal difference between the two arrangements lies in one being practically an inversion of the other. Each section commences with the left hand part of No. 3 in the right; and vice versa. The note-succession is submitted to various adjustments for the purpose of rendering the piece practicable, but the inversion basis remains.

834. The existence of this second arrangement will be considered opportune by those who decide to make the use advised of No. 3 (q.v.); as tending to enable them to pursue still further an improving form of study.

835. Brahms seems to have held these arrangements in greater esteem than those of the Chopin and Weber movements. At all events we find that he was not above practising them himself occasionally. Thus in a letter to Henry v. Herzogen-

berg, dated April 23, 1877, and after alluding to some songs which he had sent the latter in manuscript, he says:

"I enclose a Clavier-Study which will do for you when you have satiated yourself with the sweet stuff. To me it seems very pleasurable to study."

A few days later we find v. Herzogenberg saying:

"The Bach arrangement is splendid, but we mortals can only manage it four-handed; and scarcely then."

## NO. 5. CHACONNE BY J. S. BACH.

(ARRANGED FOR THE LEFT HAND.)

836. *Key, time and extent*—In D minor (changing to D major, finishing minor); no indicated movement (to be played *maestoso*); time,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ; 257 bars.

837. *Description*.—Bach's famous Chaconne although in this arrangement giving adequate occupation to the left hand is not an excessive *tour de force*. It follows the original so closely that particulars may even better be taken as from the original source. The Chaconne is upon a theme of eight bars and consists of twenty-nine settings and coda; the latter being simply the theme resumed.

838. Forkel, Bach's biographer, in alluding to Bach's "Six Solos for the Violin without accompaniment," says:

"The violin solos were universally regarded for a long series of years, by the greatest performers on the instrument, as the means of making the student a perfect master."

What is most singular however is that no music for the violin has been composed since Bach's day at all compared to his solos, either in ingenuity or in difficulty. That anyone could have executed them when Bach lived, seems now quite as unlikely as that anyone except Bach could have written them.

839. A pianoforte accompaniment was added to this Chaconne by Mendelssohn, at the request of his friend, Ferdinand David.



Perhaps Huneker's remark may serve as a hint to enable this piece to be enjoyed by moderate executants. He says:

"The immortal piece can now be enjoyed, for with Bach, Brahms is reverent to a degree. And the arrangement has one good point: it can be easily played by both hands."

## ARRANGEMENTS.

### GAVOTTE BY C. W. GLUCK.

Dedicated to Madame Clara Schumann.

840. *Key, time and extent.*—In A (changing to A minor); Grazioso; time, alla breve; 53 bars in notation; or 85 in performance with repeats.

841. *Description.*—This Gavotte is from Gluck's "Iphigenia in Aulis"; the present arrangement having been published in 1871. It is described as "for concert use"; other arrangements (presumably not by Brahms) being, for easy solo, and duet, respectively.

In the form here presented to us it makes a very agreeable concert-item; and the amount of execution required, without being excessive, is sufficient to display a good technique—especially a "singing" power by the weaker fingers.

842. A feature of the arrangement is the frequent use of three staves; which was certainly not indispensably required, although it may be allowed to have resulted in representing the middle part with extra clearness.

843. This being the last (not in point of time but in the order generally adopted) of Brahms' small arrangements, it seems to be the right moment to mention other productions of the kind not usually considered when treating of his works. These consist, in the first place, of the four-hand pianoforte arrangements of Joachim's "Henry IV" and "Demetrius" overtures; again referred to at conclusion of the Notes appended to the Choral-Preludes, Op. 122 (q.v.).

844. Brahms' only other activities connected with pianoforte work consisted in his editing the Couperin volume for

Chrysander's collection of "Denkmäler der Tonkunst," three Schubert pianoforte pieces, and the supplementary volume to Clara Schumann's complete edition of Schumann's works.

845. He also edited Mozart's "Requiem" for Breitkopf and Härtel; and, for the same firm, was joint editor with Bargiel, Franchomme, Liszt, Reinecke and Rudorff, of the complete works of Chopin.

# HUNGARIAN DANCES FOR PIANO DUET.

*Also for Pianoforte Solo by the Composer.\**

## TWENTY-ONE DANCES.

### DANCE NO. 1.

846. *Key, time and extent.*—In G minor; Allegro; time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 167 bars in notation; or 187 in performance, with repeats.

847. *Description.*—This piece is said to be founded upon the melody of

*"Isteni Czárdás,"*

or, Sacred Czardas, by Sárközy, Pecsényanski.

Although the only indicated movement is "Allegro," a distinction in speed is generally understood between the passages marked "espress" and those marked "leggiero"; the two in alternation forming a "rubato" giving zest to the dance. In addition to that, the impetuosity of concluding phrases is sometimes emphasised by a slight "accelerando"; so that on the whole the movement may be considered varied.

The dance may be considered as one formed of two sections which alternate. A feature is that the section of "cantabile" character comes first; its solemn phrases, being, as one might say, besprinkled with chord-elaborations in the spirit of the brighter movement which is to follow.

The subdivision of the sections shows the first to consist of two 24-bar settings of the same material. The second is of about equal length and contains no repetition except those indicated by double bar. The first is then repeated with slight changes; and the piece concludes with the first half of second section slightly elaborated and cadenced differently.

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\* It is to the solo arrangement, as more generally in use, that these elucidations refer more particularly; although they are generally equally applicable to the original duet.

## DANCE NO. 2.

848. *Key, time and extent.*—In D minor (changing to D major); Allegro non assai (changing to “vivace”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 141 bars in notation; or 173 in performance, with repeats.

849. *Description.*—This piece is said to be founded upon the melody of the

“*Emma Czàrdás*,”

by Mor Windt.

The dance opens very brightly; but more than usual importance is to be attached to the slackening at end of the periods, because of the salient contrasts necessary to the Hungarian style. The “vivace” has to be interpreted as rather a “wild” time; the real allegro being at the opening, and, of course, at the other places marked “in tempo.” The term “sostenuto” carries with it an idea of “poco più lento” though in too slight a degree to admit of the use of that term. Of the 173 bars used in performance only about 50 present fresh material; all the rest being either literal repetitions or elaborations of previous work. There is no “trio” effect; but the calmness of the opening of the D section is an approximation.

## DANCE NO. 3.

850. *Key, time and extent.*—In F (changing to D minor and major); Allegretto (changing to “vivace”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 75 bars in notation; or 85 in performance, with repeats.

851. *Description.*—This piece is said to be founded upon the melody of

“*Tolnai Lakadalmas*,”

or “Wedding Dance,” by J. Rimer (or Rizner).

The leading subject is extremely melodious and well contrasted with the following section in D major, “vivace.” There then follows a D minor section the connection between which and wedding festivities is certainly vague, as, during its course, Mr. Chorley’s “wicked dulcimer” is being severely thrashed, for no apparent cause. Brahms has been kind enough on this occasion to present the player with a simplified version of the bass—but though this may help the player, it seriously

mitigates the aforesaid dulcimer's punishment. The violent and sudden contrasts both of tone-volume and speed are of the same nature as those already described.

#### DANCE NO. 4.

852. *Key, time and extent.*—In F sharp minor (changing to major); poco sostenuto (changing to “vivace” and “molto allegro”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 118 bars in notation, or 203 in performance with repeats, including a long Da Capo.

853. *Description.*—This piece is said to be founded upon the melody of

“*Kalocsay-Emlek*,”

or “Reminiscences of Kalocsay,” by N. Mértý. It partly bears out this conception by seeming to be composed of tunes rather loosely connected. The dulcimer is again at work; and the whole piece recalls Elizabeth v. Herzogenberg's description of the Hungarian orchestra, with its “indescribable mixture of clicking and banging, whirling and whistling, gurgling and other half-speaking and half-singing effects.”\* The Molto allegro section seems to be a little overdrawn, especially as it is followed by a simple Da Capo; but no Coda is provided to any of these pieces.

#### DANCE NO. 5.

854. *Key, time and extent.*—In F sharp minor (changing to major); Allegro (changing to “vivace”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 104 bars in notation; or 126 in performance, with repeats.

855. *Description.*—This piece is said to be founded upon the melody of

“*Bartfai-Emlék*,”

or “Reminiscences of Bartfai,” by Kéler Béla.

This piece, although apparently also a selection, does not present the same variety of contents as the previous number. On the other hand, the periods within themselves are very rich in examples of Hungarian rhythm, and offer to students of

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\* Das Unbeschreibliche des ungarischen Orchesterklangs, das in seinem Gemisch von Quirlen und Schlagen, Klirren und Pfeifen, Gurgeln und Quinquilieren so einzig ist.

composition who are inclined to any special depth of thought upon the rhythmical subject many practical suggestions.

It may be mentioned that in the "Vivace" of this piece, as usually played, the slowness of the passages marked "poco rit." is greatly exaggerated.

## DANCE NO. 6.

856. *Key, time and extent.*—In D flat (changing to C sharp minor); "vivace" (changing to "molto sostenuto"); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 124 bars in notation; or 180 in performance, with repeats.

857. *Description.*—This piece is supposed to be founded upon the melody of a dance called

"Rózsa Bokor,"

or, "Rosebush," by Adolph Nittinger.

This is one of the most popular numbers, and, like No. 1, has a solemn Cantabile period in the prominent position of first subject. The piece is singular in starting off with a contradiction of the indicated movement. The latter, however, is taken up for the second half of the strain, with humorous effect. The molto sostenuto section is a fine contrast; and, altogether, the popularity of the piece is well explained.

## DANCE NO. 7.

858. *Key, time and extent.*—In F; Allegretto vivace (changing to "Molto sostenuto"); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 56 bars, no repeats.

859. *Description.*—This piece is founded upon a Volkslied the composer of which is unknown.

It is of the simplest possible lyric construction; the two settings which intersperse with the opening period, being well contrasted and the whole highly melodious. The contrasts however are not so demonstrative as in many of the other numbers, and the special Hungarian feature, as we understand it, accordingly, not so pronounced. The two middle periods are in C and D minor respectively; but the latter modulates to C, on which dominant a quasi-Cadenza is formed, leading to

the return. There is a slight alteration at the Cadence—the only semblance of Coda occurring in these pieces.

### DANCE NO. 8.

860. *Key, time and extent.*—In A minor; presto; time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 170 bars in notation; or 202 in performance, with repeats.

861. *Description.*—This piece is supposed to be founded upon the melody of

“*Luiza Czardas*,”

by J. Frank.

This is one of the more extended numbers, the Czardas being a dance in which the music usually runs to somewhat greater length. A feature lies in Brahms having here resorted freely to figuration, resulting in elaborate variation of some of the leading material, and drawing upon the player for considerable execution. Amongst the technical difficulties may be reckoned a long octave scale, *glissando*, for the two hands, in contrary motion. The octave scale *glissando* is sufficiently difficult for the right hand in ascending and vice versa; but this is here reversed. Students will be reminded of Variation 13 in the first book of Op. 35.

### DANCE NO. 9.

862. *Key, time and extent.*—In E minor; Allegro (changing to “*poco sostenuto*”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 61 bars in notation; or, 79 in performance, with repeats.

863. *Description.*—This piece is supposed to be founded upon the melody of

“*Makóc Czàrdás*,”

by J. Travnik.

The rollicking character of the Czardas is here in pronounced form. The harmonic progressions of the first section are highly interesting, as is also the rhythm of the “*poco sostenuto*”; the second portion of the latter presenting a good example of division of the three-bar phrase into 2 + 1, with humorous effect. This piece makes a brilliant display of the player’s technical power, and scarcely seems to be in the enjoyment of the favour which its attractiveness would warrant.



## DANCE NO. 10.

864. *Key, time and extent.*—In E; Presto (with occasional “sostenuto” and “sempre più presto” towards conclusion); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 94 bars in notation; or 98 in performance, with repeat.

865. *Description.*—This piece is supposed to be founded upon the melody of

“*Tolnai Lakadalmas*,”

by J. Rizner (or Rimer).

This number is extremely difficult when taken at a good “Presto speed.” No doubt Theodor Kirschner, who arranged the second collection for pianoforte solo from the four-hand original, felt conscientiously obliged to include every subordinate feature; amongst which there would be some which Brahms himself would have omitted, as easy enough for four hands, but scarcely compensating for their trouble in a solo arrangement. Nevertheless, the difficulties, in the hands of those who are capable of conquering them, amply repay the pains of bringing them under control; and under these conditions the piece is of course one of the most brilliant of the set.

## DANCE NO. 11.

866. *Key, time and extent.*—In D doric (changing to G doric); Poco andante; time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 59 bars in notation; or 67 in performance, with repeat.

867. *Description.*—This number commences the second collection; the portion of the work in which Brahms included among the dances some of his original compositions. We have here on the whole the instance of a tune in Dorian mode as is shown by an apparent key of D minor requiring the natural signature. The use of the major dominant, however, excludes the piece as a pure sample in this respect; especially as the modern leading note finds its way occasionally into the melody as well. This dance is of solemn character, the harmonic progression upon which it is built being very solid and sustained.

## DANCE NO. 12.

868. *Key, time and extent.*—In D minor (changing to D major); Presto (changing to “poco meno presto”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 140 bars in notation; or 147 bars in performance, with repeat

869. *Description*.—This, like No. 21, is highly effective and attractive in every sense, save that it seems to collect phrases which occur elsewhere in a context giving them more originality; and that, in consequence, the individual impression of the number is weak. A feature lies in the contrast between the inherent wildness of the phrases and the general softness of the indicated marks of expression. The temptation to a loud effect is so natural, that the piece is seldom played as it ought to be; but players should note that a peculiar effect lies in the uncommon contrast between the character of a phrase and its expression.

#### DANCE NO. 13.

870. *Key, time and extent*.—In D; Andantino grazioso (changing to “vivace”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 59 bars in notation; no repeats.

871. *Description*.—This number consists of two contrasted sections, and is also another instance of the cantabile section coming first. The latter possesses a lovely rhythm, in three-bar-phrase formations; the grace of which is the more apparent in consequence of the sternly duple demarcation of the phrases of the “vivace.” The repetition of the Cantabile is characterised by a flowing motion of the inner parts, and contains a “cello” melody of such expressive kind as almost to suggest a reference to something of which we are not informed. A drum-figure consisting of two quavers with preceding semi-quavers marks every second and third bar of the three-bar phrase.

#### DANCE NO. 14.

872. *Key, time and extent*.—In D minor; un poco andante; time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 27 bars in notation; or, 33 bars in performance, with repeat.

873. *Description*.—This is another of the more sedate pieces which may be said somewhat to abound in the second collection. It forms the subject of warm remark in one of Elizabeth v. Herzogenberg’s letters when, in the midst of telling Brahms which were her favourites and after specially

dwelling upon the beauty of No. 15 she stops suddenly short with—

“Ah! but then the good little No. 14!”

As a compliment to Brahms this ejaculation is the more to be esteemed as the lady did not know that it was Brahms' original composition; although the presence of such features as diminished thirds in the melody might have caused a shrewd suspicion.

### DANCE NO. 15.

874. *Key, time and extent.*—In B flat (changing to B flat minor); andante grazioso (changing to “animato,” “più vivace” and “più presto”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 103 bars in notation; no repeats.

875. *Description.*—This is unquestionably one of the best numbers; its beauties being sufficiently manifold to warrant a detailed exposition. It contains three sections none of which are repeated, so that also in quantity of material it exceeds most of the other dances. It was the second section of this piece and its happy way of treating the whirl of the dulcimer which caused Elizabeth v. Herzogenberg to say:

“Where they only make a noise you attain to a noble *fortissimo*; and just at the right moment, at the end, rhythmical combinations occur to you, which could only there be used, but which then have a wonderful effect, like the noise of the famous bass of No. 15.”

The concluding “Più vivace” offers one of the most graceful combinations of two against three, which even Brahms ever wrote.

### DANCE NO. 16.

876. *Key, time and extent.*—In F minor (changing to F major and A minor, finishing F major); con moto (changing to “presto,” “poco meno presto” and “poco animato”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 107 bars in notation; or, 111 in performance, with repeat.

877. *Description.*—The opening F minor section of this piece may be regarded as an introduction; as it is not only different in style to the remainder, but not even the key is afterwards repeated. Considering the dance as beginning with the Presto it consists of two sections of 24 with intermezzo of

12 bars followed by return of the first section. The presto sections are of extremely vivacious character, but the piece lacks key-contrast; as the 12-bar intermezzo in A minor is insufficient to relieve so long a continuance in F.

### DANCE NO. 17.

878. *Key, time and extent.*—In F sharp minor (changing to F sharp major); Andantino (changing to “vivace” and “meno presto”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 112 bars in notation; no repeats.

879. *Description.*—This piece is constructed upon nearly the same lines as the last number—an introduction; and then two sections (the opening of the second having very much the character of an interlude) with repeat of the first one. The introduction in this case, whatever may be its origin, owes much to the mode of its arrangement. It consists of what may be described as an earnest “fourth string” melody; and the entire grace is due to the “two against three” quaver arrangement, in which the normal  $\frac{2}{4}$  time is first in the melody, and then in the accompaniment; and vice versa. As usually happens after such refinements, in the remaining sections there is a complete absence of them; the rest of the dance being of simple rhythm, and of the normal Hungarian vivacious character.

### DANCE NO. 18.

880. *Key, time and extent.*—In D; Molto vivace; time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 74 bars in notation; or, 88 in performance, with repeats.

881. *Description.*—There is such artistic finish about this piece, that Brahms’ share in the transaction looms before the mind at once. No “national melodies” would enable us to account for the fact that, whilst, in the second part of the first section, the original figure is preserved, and the melody thus seems to continue uninterruptedly, a counter-melody of rollicking character is introduced, causing us to wonder which we are to regard as principal in the matter. Later on, moreover, a similar counter-melody appears in connection with the first part of the same section. These are features which are due to Brahms in any event; and they are precisely those which give

an individual interest to this piece, which in other respects is inclined to conventional Hungarian phrases.

### DANCE NO. 19.

882. *Key, time and extent.*—In B minor (changing to B major); Allegretto (changing to “sostenuto” and “più presto”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 67 bars in notation; or 74 bars in performance, with repeat.

883. *Description.*—This is a number which specially reminds us of an aspect in which the whole collection of “Hungarian Dances” may be viewed; that, namely, of a collection of pieces exhibiting the utmost variety of rhythm possible to be obtained from  $\frac{2}{4}$  time, for it must be remembered that the whole of the dances are noted in bars of that length. If, for purposes of instruction, a collection were made of the varieties of distribution of rhythmical accent which occur in these pieces, the result would be as much a matter of surprise as of enlightenment. The student can only be generally referred to the rhythmical traits here presented, as they are too numerous and complicated to be treated singly.

### DANCE NO. 20.

884. *Key, time and extent.*—In E minor (changing to E major); Allegretto (changing to “vivace”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 75 bars in notation; no repeats.

885. *Description.*—This piece consists of the contrast of two melodies, one sentimental and the other vivacious; and is quite the reverse of comprehensive in point of contents. Moreover, the opening section has a chaconne character not very distinctively Hungarian; and, altogether, there is a marked trace of Brahms’ original handiwork throughout. Apropos of this remark, Elizabeth v. Herzogenberg may be quoted:

“If I take for example a melody like that of No. 20, although I do not profess to know, I cannot imagine that, without you, it would ever have taken such noble form.”

In the second collection commencing with No. 11 there were several by Brahms; so that probably, even in those which were not absolutely original, there was a greater admixture of his work than in the first books.

#### DANCE NO. 21.

886. *Key, time and extent.*—In E minor; Vivace (changing to “più presto”); time,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ; 81 bars in notation; or 97 in performance, with repeats.

887. *Description.*—This is a very animated number throughout; and, for that reason, presents less than the usual amount of contrast. The opening period appears to be in Dorian mode, which is one to which the modern ear somewhat readily lends itself—often to the extent of not noticing the change. The same scale was used for No. 11, to which the reader may refer for illustration; bearing in mind however that, as Brahms has used a major dominant in both cases, he evidently did not design either of them as a modal example. The principal defect of the present piece is that it presents nothing new; every phrase which it contains having been already rendered familiar by the other numbers. Considered without reference to this fact, however, it must be pronounced to be extremely effective.

#### NOTES TO THE HUNGARIAN DANCES.

888. All advanced musicians feel an attraction to Hungarian music, so that prima facie, there is nothing surprising in Brahms falling under the same spell. But his extreme cultivation of the rhythmic feature brought it within the very nature of things that in his case the fascination should be something special. The whole world is therefore agreed as to his peculiar aptitude and Huneker, for example, only echoes the general verdict in stating that:

“He penetrated more deeply than any other composer the Hungarian spirit,”

and that:

“He caught to a greater degree than others the colour,

swing and perfume—the mad melancholy and reckless joy of the Hungarian dance.”

889. The Hungarians themselves are very fond of pointing to the antiquity of their music, of the ancient importance of which there is ample historical proof; though unfortunately none of the Huns' songs, or of the melodies to which the legends relating the deeds of Hungarian heroes were set, have been preserved.

890. Among Hungarian dances perhaps the most ancient was the “Dance of Death”; a remnant of heathen funeral rites, due probably to the common tendency of the peoples of Eastern Europe to unite the song and dance—whatever might be the nature of the subject on hand. This tendency forms the prime basis of the interest created in us; because it is that principally which has given rise to those peculiarities of rhythm in which modern musicians most properly delight to indulge. Unconsciously perhaps they are thereby seeking to regain what was lost when, upon the Palestrina school reaching its climax, and upon commencement of the uprise of instrumental music pure and simple, the “metrical convention,” as it is sometimes called, was founded, whereby so much of our modern music was enslaved.

891. It is much to be regretted that the phrase-formation of the

### “Siebensprünge”

which was taught in the tenth century to the people of the Lake of Constance by the Hungarians residing there cannot be traced; but the very name of “seven-step” seems to indicate an early appreciation of the rhythmic value of odd numbers and to point to the fact that first impulses in the rhythmic direction were not precisely what the prejudices of modern musicians have so constantly led them to assume.

892. The dance tunes of Barna and Panna of the eighteenth century however still survive, and their successor Bihary was honoured by Beethoven in the utilisation of one of his slow melodies for the “King Stephen” overture. Beethoven was like Brahms in respect of acting rather than talking about these subjects, but his feeling was doubtless the same as that expressed by Liszt when he said:

“There is no other music from which European musi-

cians can learn so much rhythmic originality as the Hungarian."

893. That Brahms was of the same view goes entirely without saying; the lesson alluded to by Liszt having been learned by him so well, that it may now in turn be learned from him.

894. The "Palace" and the "Slow Hungarian" were court dances; whilst the "Weisen" to which no specific names were applied and which were merely known as "dances," as well as the

"Dumping-tune,"

were those of the peasantry and of the people generally.

895. From the court dances arose the

"Verbunkos,"

which Julius Kaldy tells us was used in recruiting; and he patriotically adds—what we may well believe—that no other nation possesses the like of it.

896. Then, there were special wedding-dances bearing the names—

"Kalákás," and "Lakodalmus";

as also military dances, entitled—

"Sátoros" and "Fegyveres";

and a dance of coquettish character named—

"Incelcado."

897. The distinction between the two wedding-dances does not seem clear; but the first and second military dances are respectively described as

"Dance of the Tents," and "Dance of Arms";

evidently indicative of two degrees of preparation for battle—the series being completed by another military dance entitled—

"Dobogó,"

or, in other words, the "drumming" or "camp" dance—used generally when the battle was over.

898. The above list fairly comprises all the ancient dances of which we have any knowledge; but to them must now be added several specimens of nineteenth century origin, regarding which we are of course far better informed. For present



purposes, however, the names will be sufficiently indicative of their nature; such as the—

“Körmagyar,”

which is what we should call a “round-dance”; the

“Küzértáncz,”

or “wreath dance”; and, last but not least, the well-known “tavern dance”; which it is amusing to know bids fair to retain a full vitality, and which, moreover, has been much popularised in other countries by means of the specimens provided by Michaelis: viz., the

“Czardas.”

899. So much with regard to the nature of the material which Brahms understood to treat for the clavier; and now as to the manner in which he accomplished his task. This cannot be better described than by culling a few expressions from the letter of Elizabeth v. Herzogenberg to Brahms, dated July 23, 1880. After describing how accurately she finds the new arrangement reproduce the peculiarities of the Hungarian orchestra she goes on to say:

“What astonishes me most in your production is that it raises these dances, which previously contained no more than the mere elements of beauty, to the level of works of art; and this without in the least infringing upon their wildness or elementary force.”

900. Shortly afterwards she singles out No. 14 for especial praise; which is somewhat amusing by light of the fact that this is not an arrangement at all, but an original dance by Brahms, and serviceable also as a verdict upon that department of the work. For the rest we cannot do better than echo the passage in which she quits the subject and which runs as follows:

“If I were to quote all I have to praise in these dances I should go on until I had quoted nearly everything.”

★★ Besides the original for four hands and the solo arrangement of Books 1 and 2 by the composer, and of Books 3

and 4 by Theodor Kirchner, there are the following pianoforte arrangements; all being by R. Keller. Easy arrangement for solo and duet; arrangement for six hands on one piano; and arrangements for either two or four performers on two pianos. As for other arrangements they are too innumerable even for mention.

OP. 122. ORGAN WORKS (POSTHUMOUS).

ELEVEN CHORAL PRELUDES.

FIRST PRELUDE. "MEIN JESU, DER DU MICH."

(*My Jesus, Thou who didst.*)

901. *Key, time and extent.*—In E minor\*; (*Allegro moderato*†); time, common; 51 bars.

902. *Theme.*—The metre of this Chorale consists of six lines of five syllables each; the opening words being as under :

Mein Jesu der mich  
Zum Lustspiel ewiglich  
Dir hast erwählet.  
Sieh wie dein Eigenthum  
Des grossen Bräut'gams Ruhm  
So gern erzählet.

or :—

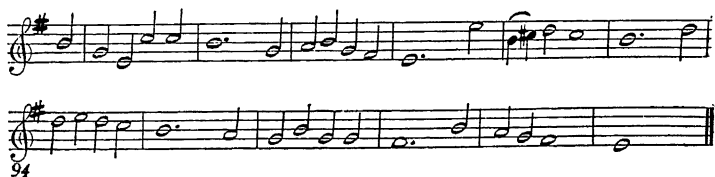
My Jesus, Thou who hast  
Chosen for ages past  
Me for Thine own.  
See how Thine own doth raise  
His voice to sing the praise  
Of Thee alone.

---

\* All the preludes which are in minor keys finish with the major third; except No. 10.

† With the exception of Nos. 2 and 6 these choral-preludes are not provided with any indication of the degree of movement. The time at which the chorale is usually sung has therefore been taken as a basis from which to calculate the speed requisite for the figuration; such indications being placed in parenthesis to distinguish them from those of the composer.

903. The melody lies in the bass of the Brahms setting and is in perfectly plain form; each line of text being separated by four bars of figuration.



904. *Description.*—The prelude opens with a fugal exposition of five bars; the first line of the chorale, slightly paraphrased, being taken as the subject, and treated tonally. The entry of the tonal answer is, as it were, the point of measurement for the future distance between the various lines of text; all henceforth proceeding upon the same inexorable plan, and each final note being sustained by the pedal as far as the first crotchet of the succeeding bar.

905. The great feature of this setting is that, during each line of text, the “fugato” becomes intermingled with motives out of which, upon the pedal ceasing, we hear a new subject emerge. This new subject stands in the same relation to the next line of text as did the original subject to the first line; and, as the original procedure is repeated each time in full, we have as many fugal interludes as lines—interludes which by their artistic treatment may be indifferently regarded, either as literal “Zwischenspiele,” or as preludes for the coming lines.

Fuller-Maitland counts “Mein Jesu” with Nos. 2 and 9 as three preludes which “carry us back to Bach by their exquisite mastery of contrapuntal effect.”

“Monumental; as if cast in bronze,” is Egidi’s verdict upon this setting.

## SECOND PRELUDE. “HERZLIEBSTER JESU.”

(*Saviour of my heart.*)

906. *Key, time and extent.*—In G minor; Adagio; time, common; 30 bars.

907. *Theme*.—The tune, dated 1640, is by Johann Krüger, and forms a complete setting of the stanza without repeats. The stanza consists of three lines of eleven, and one of five, syllables; the music being in four corresponding phrases. Brahms has adopted the original version, commencing:

Herzliebster Jesu, was hast Du verbrochen  
 Das man ein solch scharf Urtheil hat gesprochen?  
 Was ist die Schuld?

or:—

Beloved Jesus! What law hast Thou broken  
 That cruel judgment over Thee is spoken?

but in some collections it is necessary, for identification of the tune, to refer to:

Herr unser Gott! Lass nicht zu Schanden werden  
 Die so in ihren Nöthen und Beschwerden  
 Bei Tag und Nacht auf Deine Güte hoffen  
 Und zu Dir rufen.

or:—

O Lord! may it not hasten Thy displeasure,  
 That we, beset by trouble without measure,  
 Hoping our day and nightly prayers may reach Thee,  
 Should sore beseech Thee.

908. The following example shows the melody as in common use, a comparison of which with the Brahms setting will show the latter to be one of those cases in which the melody, being in the soprano, is allowed to share in the figuration.



909. *Description*.—The motives which characterise the parts individually are in this case more modern. Independently of the chorale they may serve the student as an exemplification of the use of the diminished fifth in counterpoint. The modifications of the Chorale occur very naturally, as the result of its partaking in the flow of the attendant fugato. The

“Adagio” of this number requires some modification for piano performance; as the absence of organ *sostenuto* would otherwise be too seriously felt.

### THIRD PRELUDE. “O WELT, ICH MUSS DICH LASSEN.”

*(O world, I e'en must leave thee.)*

910. *Key, time and extent.*—In F; (Andante); time, alla-breve (four minims); with occasional  $\frac{3}{2}$ ; 20 bars.

911. *Theme.*—This melody, supposed to be of even more ancient origin, was printed in 1539, being then attributed to Heinrich Isaac. The metre is peculiar, viz.:

7 7 6; 7 7 8,

the music being the same for each three lines, except that the six syllables have a half-cadence only; whereas the eight syllables, with a slight extension, lead on to tonic.

912. In this case the Brahms setting does not appear to be allied with the original words; this chorale being better known under the title of “Nun ruhen alle Wälder,” the words of which are by Paul Gerhard (1653) and commence:

Nun ruhen alle Wälder,  
Vieh, Menschen, Städt' und Felder,  
Es schläft die ganze Welt.

or:—

The woodland is reposing,  
The working day is closing,  
The world is now at rest.

The Brahms text is however in frequent use; and is sometimes found in collections side by side with the above. It commences:

O Welt ich muss dich lassen,  
Ich fahr dahin mein Strassen  
Ins ew'ge Vaterland.

or:—

O World thy scenes forsaking,  
My lonely way I'm taking  
To the eternal home.

The melody of the Chorale is as follows:—



and, as, in the Brahms setting it lies in the soprano, it is allowed to partake in the figuration.

913. *Description*.—The counterpoint forms a continual quaver-motion based upon a motive of pleading import. Fuller-Maitland considers that this and the following number have “the poignant emotional intensity that is the supreme quality in Bach’s work.”

#### FOURTH PRELUDE. “HERZLICH THUT MICH ERFREUEN.”

(*My inmost heart rejoiceth.*)

914. *Key, time and extent*.—In D; (Andante); time,  $\frac{6}{4}$ ; 34 bars.

915. *Theme*.—The metre of this Chorale consists of eight lines of seven and six syllables alternatively; the opening words being as under:—

Herzlich thut mich erfreuen,  
Die liebe Sommerzeit,  
Wann Gott wird schön verneuen  
Alles zur Ewigkeit.

or:—

A joy my heart o’erstealeth,  
For soon the time shall be,  
When God His Face revealeth  
For all eternity.

The melody lies in the soprano of the Brahms setting and is in plain form; the lines of text being each separated by four bars of figuration. It is as follows:—



916. *Description.*—The working of this Chorale is with a varying number of accompanying parts; of which at least one is reserved for the continuance of a flowing quaver motion, mostly cast in the form of half-bar arpeggio figurations. The general manipulation of parts is so flowing and graceful that it almost infringes upon the Chorale character; but any danger of this kind is more than redeemed by the serious import which we soon discover to underlie the elaboration.

917. The figuration, which is interspersed between the lines of text forms, if united, a complete setting of the Chorale, from end to end; only, instead of starting with the tonic, it starts with the dominant; and is treated, sometimes tonally, and sometimes strictly, according to its degree of natural adjustment to the next line of text. Thus we see how the existence of firm design favours an excursion into the realms of fancy; and, as Florence May observes of this prelude, though it is in lighter vein than the others, it is none the less Brahms.

## FIFTH PRELUDE. "SCHMÜCKE DICH, O LIEBE SEELE."

*(Deck thyself out, O my soul.)*

918. *Key, time and extent.*—In E (Andante molto moderato); time, common; 22 bars.

919. *Theme.*—This melody is generally ascribed to Johann Krüger, and dated 1649. The stanza consists of six lines, of eight syllables; the music, however, of only five corresponding phrases—the first two and third being repeated so as to cover



six lines of text. The words, as given by Brahms, are the original; and commence:—

Schmücke dich, O liebe Seele,  
Lass die dunkle Sündenhöhle.

or:—

Soul, put on thy best array,  
Hie from sinful vale away,

though, as quoted in the hymnals, the first words are frequently

Zeige dich uns ohne Hülle;  
Ström' auf uns der Gnaden Fülle,

or:—

Let us know Thee more and more;  
Fullness of Thy grace outpour,

by Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1769).

920. Brahms' melody differs in several respects from the version in common use, as may be seen from the following:—



921. In the above example the Brahms version is shown by small notes in the upper octave. The setting is in three real parts, for hands alone, and consists of polyphony in semi-quaver motion against the Chorale, precisely as above, inclusive of repeats; except that "repeats" are to be understood as of the melody only—not of the counterpoint. The motives for the latter are principally derived from diminutions of portions of the theme, and their beauty will be apt to escape the student unless he makes them the object of separate study. Let him therefore take the counterpoint into separate use as a two-part "Invention" (in which sense he will find it perfectly self-sufficing); and dwell as he proceeds upon the artistic diminutions presented, and which continually relate to the particular line of the Chorale which is being

played. He will afterwards find, upon adding the Chorale, that his enjoyment of the piece has increased, tenfold.

# SIXTH PRELUDE. "O WIE SELIG SEID IHR DOCH, IHR FROMMEN."

(*O how blessed, faithful spirits, are ye.*)

922. *Key, time and extent.*—In D minor; Molto moderato; time,  $\frac{1\frac{1}{2}}{8}$ ; 14 bars.

923. *Theme.*—This is variously ascribed to Heinrich Albert (1650) and to Johann Krüger (1649). The metre consists of

10, 10, 5, 10,

which is set in independent musical phrases without repeats.

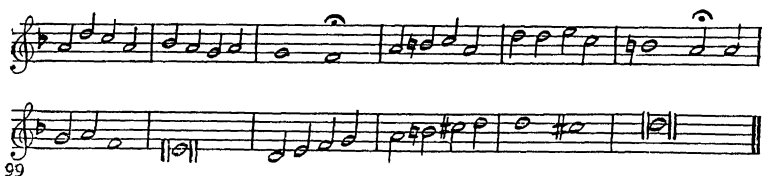
The words are by Simon Dach (1635) and commence:—

O wie selig seid ihr doch, ihr Frommen,  
Die ihr durch den Tod zu Gott gekommen;  
Ihr seid entgangen;  
Aller Noth, die uns noch hält gefangen.

or:—

Thrice happy ye who in the Lord have died,  
Through death your way to Heav'n was opened wide;  
Your cares releasing;  
Whilst we must suffer need and stress unceasing.

924. The melody of the Chorale is as follows:—



In Brahms' setting the melody is in the soprano, and joins

somewhat in the figuration; as in the case of No. 2. The separate notes are dotted minims of  $\frac{12}{8}$ , against which three real parts are set; except for the last note of the Chorale, where the fullness is increased by an extra part in sympathy with the organ habit of doubling at a cadence in *forte*.

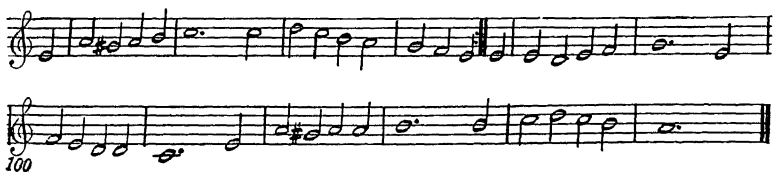
925. The references of the accompanying parts to the line of Chorale which is being accompanied are more subtle in this instance; but; just as real as in previous numbers. The student is again advised to take the counterpoint alone, as a means of making himself familiar with the relation. At the same time, both the artistic invention shown in the accompanying parts as regards their motives, as well as the actual part-writing must be admitted to be less happy than in the other numbers; the shortness of the piece being alone sufficient to explain its not rising to any particular height either of interest or effect.

## SEVENTH PRELUDE. "O GOTT, DU FROMMER GOTT."

(*O God, Thou Holiest.*)

926. *Key, time and extent.*—In A minor; (*Allegretto*); time, allabreve; 63 bars.

927. *Theme.*—The melody associated with these words in some collections is quite different from that of the Brahms setting; which is as follows:—



From this it will be seen that the metre is

6, 8, 6, 8; 6 6 6 6,

the opening words being as under:—

O Gott, du frommer Gott,  
Du Brunnquel guter Gaben;  
Ohn' den nichts ist was ist,  
Vom dem wir alles haben.

or :—

O God, most Holy One,  
Who ev'ry good gift sendeth,  
Without whom naught can be,  
From whom our all descendeth.

928. *Description*.—This Chorale is very happily treated—in something of the same vein as No. 4, though without the slightest resemblance. The coming line in each case suggests the motive for the interlude; and, as occasion seems to be taken to accentuate whatever trait the melodic progression of the Chorale may present, and as, moreover, the interludes are of considerable length, many of them being as long as seven bars, the whole piece attains to some development. The first 22 bars, representing the first section of the above example, are repeated literally; after which a repeated note in the coming line of the Chorale is allowed to suggest a new motive of different character to rest, and which forms a pleasant contrast to the remainder.

Towards conclusion the interludes become of more variable length; which combined with an increased chromatic character seems to have some reference to the prayerfulness of the text.

Fuller-Maitland observes of this number that “it has some of the artless charm of the folk-songs which were so near Brahms’ heart.” The character to which allusion is here made seems to be due to the particular rhythm of the accompanying parts, which is one of which Brahms was fond.

## EIGHTH PRELUDE. “ES IST EIN’ ROS’ ENTSPRUNGEN.”

(*A rose breaks into bloom.*)

929. *Key, time and extent*.—In F; (Andante); time,  $\frac{6}{4}$ ; 22 bars.

930. *Theme*.—The metre of this Chorale consists of seven

lines of 7, 6, 7, 6; 6, 7, 7 lines respectively; the opening words being as under:—

Es ist ein' Ros' entsprungen  
 Aus einer Wurzel zart,  
 Wie uns die Alten sungen  
 Von Jesse war die Art.  
 Und hat ein Blümlein bracht  
 Mitten im Kalten Winter  
 Wohl zu der halben Nacht.

or:—

There is a rosebud springing  
 Upon a tender tree,  
 As wise of old were singing  
 From Jesse 'twas to be.  
 It now brings forth its flower  
 'Mid the cold breath of winter  
 And at the midnight hour.

931. The melody lies in the soprano of the Brahms setting (though for the third line of the stanza it is divided between alto and tenor) and is much disguised by ornamentation. In plain form it appears to run as follows:—



932. *Description.*—The whole piece is conceived as a delicate four-part setting of the above, for hands alone. The progressions are graceful, and the various parts individually melodic; the upper part, representing the melody, being subject to corresponding inflections, and consequently showing the degree of ornamentation already alluded to.

The harmony is very luxuriant and as regards means is chiefly remarkable for a very free use of the "under-changing" note. As an organ-piece it is the very ideal of a soft-voluntary; and the effects derivable from it are very

numerous, in consequence of each one of the four parts being an attractive separate melody.

Florence May observes of this prelude that it is one of the most delicately touching of the set.

## NINTH PRELUDE. "HERZLICH THUT MICH VERLANGEN."

*(My inmost heart doth yearn.)*

933. *Key, time and extent.*—In A minor; (Poco adagio); time, common; 17 bars.

934. *Theme.*—The melody is by Hans Leo Hasler (1601), by whom it was set as a popular song; being afterwards arranged as a Chorale by Johann Hermann Schein in 1627. The stanza consists of eight lines formed of seven and six syllables alternately. It would appear that several hymns are habitually sung to the same tune; but the one most likely to be encountered in tracing a melody is that commencing:—

O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden,  
Voll Schmerz und voller Hohn!  
O Haupt, zum Spott gebunden  
Mit einer Dornenkron'!

which was written by Paul Gerhard in 1659 in imitation of

"Salve caput cruentatum,"

a Latin hymn composed by St. Bernard of Clairvaux (*b.* 1091, *d.* 1153).

The above lines may be rendered as:—

O Head, so sorely bleeding,  
By pain and grief cast down,  
Where sinful men unheeding  
Once placed the thorny crown.

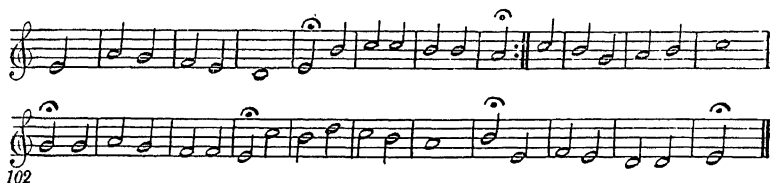
The Brahms text begins:—

Herzlich thut mich verlangen  
Nach einen sel'gen End,  
Weil ich hie bin umfange  
Mit Trübsal und Elend.

or:—

Deep from my heart I'm longing  
 A holy death to die,  
 For naught around is thronging  
 But pain with many a sigh.

The melody is in the soprano; but may not be easily recognisable without aid. The following is the Chorale in plain form.



935. *Description.*—The character of the setting is, in general, very much the same as No. 5; the differences being that there are now four parts instead of three, and that, in this number, the melodic inflections of the accompanying parts are reflected in the theme, giving rise to a profuse degree of ornamentation.

# TENTH PRELUDE. "HERZLICH THUT MICH VERLANGEN."

*(My inmost heart doth yearn.)*

936. *Key, time and extent.*—In A minor; (moderato); time,  $\frac{6}{4}$  (5 bars common); 21 bars.

937. *Theme.*—All particulars are the same as for No. 9 (q.v.).

938. *Description.*—There is an orchestral character about this setting due to the figures employed. So far as these figures relate to the organ they bespeak a light treatment—the only one suited to the interminable repeated notes in quavers which form the principal feature of the piece. These quavers only cease at the line

"Ich hab Lust abzuschneiden von dieser argen Welt"

(I long to say farewell to such a dreary world), when the rendering should be extremely piano; the customary force being resumed at reappearance of the quaver figure.

The Chorale appears in the pedal in this number, but is rendered in stops of 8 ft. tone; and Fuller-Maitland, probably in allusion to this feature, mentions the "strange distribution of parts," which he deems to create effects new to the organ, and to show the master's untiring originality.

## ELEVENTH PRELUDE. "O WELT ICH MUSS DICH LASSEN."

(*O world, I e'en must leave thee.*)

939. *Key, time and extent.*—In F; (poco Adagio); time, common; 32 bars.

940. *Theme.*—All particulars are the same as for No. 3 (q.v.).

941. *Description.*—This is one of the most beautiful numbers of the set. In it the same devices have been used as in several previous instances, but they are here handled with a greater freedom. Thus the principal figures of the counterpoint are again derived from the theme; but in such a way as to render the fact obscure to those inexperienced in such analysis. The tapering prolongation of the lines by means of a sort of double echo, and which takes the place of the usual interlude, has been frequently remarked upon as a beautiful feature; and it is noticeable how Brahms' tact intervened to prevent a mechanical effect from its recurrence at equal intervals, for just as this would be likely to arrest attention the length of the interlude is changed\* and the polyphony rendered slightly more chromatic. Each line of the Chorale is delivered pompously in *ff*; the transition to the echo passages being a sudden one. The last words are:—

Mein Geist will ich aufgeben  
Dazu mein Leib und Leben  
Befehl'n in Gottes gnäd'ge Hand,

---

\* The same device was made use of in No. 7; though not quite for the same purpose.



which, in our equivalent, stand for—"Into Thy Hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit."

Fuller-Maitland says of this number that:—

"It has an effect of a double-echo; not a literal repetition, but a gradual fading-away, as it were, of the last notes of each line. If it is safe to regard it as Brahms' last actual composition it must be admitted that none of the great composers has given the world a final utterance of more exquisite and touching beauty. The last few bars have a cadence of such fresh and expressive beauty as even Brahms himself never surpassed; and once again, we are reminded of Bach whose last composition was a Choral-prelude on 'Vor deinem Thron tret' ich hiemit.'"

## NOTES ON THE CHORAL PRELUDES.

942. These "Choral-Vorspiele" were composed at Ischl. in May and June, 1896; and Arthur Egidi, in an article written for the Brahms-Heft of "Die Musik," attributes their existence to the composer's illness at the time. He refers also to the work by which they had been immediately preceded—the four "Serious Songs," Op. 121—in order to show that for some time Brahms had been pondering upon solemn subjects. The two works were evidently coupled in Brahms' mind; for we find him referring to them both in a single paragraph, when, in writing to Herzogenberg from Ischl, he says:

"I have a trifle to send you shortly which will enable you to censure me for unchristian opinions in your new paper. There is something else, too, not very particular, but not intended for print, which I should have liked to show you, at the piano."

943. The first reference was to the "Serious Songs" and the second (as is commonly supposed) to these preludes; so that Egidi's conclusion seems extremely probable. Moreover, the choice of subjects shows a constant dwelling upon the thought of bidding farewell to the world, and, out of eleven preludes, we have the following which show a pathetic directness of allusion to this subject:—

Nos. 3 and 11.—“O Welt, ich muss dich lassen.” (Oh world! I e’en must leave thee.)

No. 5.—“Schmücke dich, O liebe Seele.” (Deck thyself out, oh my soul.)

No. 6.—“O wie selig seid ihr doch, ihr Frommen.” (Oh! how blessed are ye! ye departed.)

Nos. 9 and 10.—“Herzlich thut mich verlangen.” (Deep from my heart I’m longing)

besides which it is observable that, of those chorales the text of which contains the most touching references to such farewell, there are two settings.

944. Assuming this, we must agree with Egidi that, in this work, Brahms was actuated by a feeling superior to any mere desire for artistic excellence; and the result has been a greater infusion of sentiment into the subsidiary subjects which constitute the “Bearbeitung” than we are accustomed to expect from this form. Though Bach was unquestionably his model therefore his mode of treatment is essentially an independent one; as, for example, may be gathered by comparing No. 9 “Herzlich thut mich verlangen”) with Bach’s No. 27 (Peters Edition, Vol. V).

In short, these preludes have also a pathetic meaning applying to ourselves; for they are the last handshake of a beloved master who, even to the end when beset by suffering, could not part from us without an earnest repetition of his life-long admonition to build up rather than destroy, and to hold the past in reverence.

945. Nos. 5, 6 and 8 are without pedal in the original; and are therefore playable upon the piano without arrangement.

These preludes are available in five different forms of arrangement, viz.:—

For piano duet (complete); arrangement by E. Mandy-czewski.

For piano solo (complete); arrangement by Paul Juon.

For harmonium (complete); arrangement by Aug. Reinhard.

For piano (concert-arrangement of Nos. 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, by Busoni) and Nos. 1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, for harmonium, arranged by Aug. Reinhard.

946. On June 24, 1896, Brahms played seven of these preludes to Heuberger at Ischl. “Splendid pieces,” says Heu-

berger's diary; and, in another entry dated July 5, "Brahms' things must have been sent away already, for he promised to show me some *new* compositions." These were no doubt some more preludes. Eleven were all that could be found after Brahms' death; and, of these last, four were written on a different kind of paper from that used for the first seven.

\* \* \*

947. A clause in Brahms' will provided that any of his unpublished works found in his rooms after death should be the property of Simrock, his publisher. There was one opus only—the present collection of organ preludes. With them were the arrangements, as pianoforte duets, of Joachim's two Overtures. All three works had to wait for publication till 1902, in consequence of difficulties connected with the will.

## CHORAL PRELUDE AND FUGUE ON "O TRAURIGKEIT."

948. *Key, time and extent.*—In A minor; prelude, "poco adagio"; fugue, "adagio"; time of the prelude common, as equivalent of  $\frac{1\frac{1}{2}}{8}$ ; time for the fugue, common; prelude, 17 bars; fugue, 47 bars.

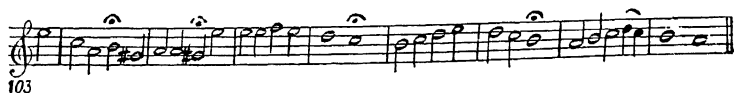
949. *Thematic material.*—The composer of the melody of the chorale, "O Traurigkeit," appears to be unknown, but the music dates from 1628. The metre consists of five lines of 4, 4, 7, 7, 6 syllables respectively; the tune being formed of corresponding independent phrases without repeats.

950. The words are by Johan Anastasius Freylinghausen (died 1739) and commence as follows:—

Der Tag ist hin;  
Mein Herz und Sinn  
Sehnt sich nach jenem Tage  
Der mich völlig machen wird  
Frei von aller Plage.

or:—

The hours depart;  
My mind and heart  
Await the happy dawning  
Of the day to make me free  
From all cause of mourning.



951. *Description*.—Brahms has used this Chorale at a tone higher than it is usually sung; and, in the prelude, has introduced a few minor inflections which, as we have seen in Op. 122, usually occur when the melody is in the upper part. The cantus is in common time; against a  $\frac{12}{8}$  counterpoint of graceful motion for inner parts, and a solid bass. The lines of the stanza are divided by half a bar and a supplementary cadence of five bars concludes in the tonic major.

952. In the Fugue the Chorale appears in the pedal, and in the precise form shown in the above example. It enters at the thirteenth bar, the lines of text being separated by four bars, and the final note being converted into a tonic organ point.

953. With regard to the subject of the fugue it would seem that the composer while wishing to derive it from the Chorale preferred to disguise it more effectively than by a mere diminution. Every organ player will applaud this method; for it is the ruin of some otherwise good Fugues with Chorale that the subject of the Fugue is a mere microscopic view of the cantus, instead of displaying some independence. Brahms' precaution in this case is amusing; for he has first taken a line from the middle, and, having re-phrased it, turned it upside down and begun. In this wise:—



954. Here we have the artistic use of scientific device exemplified; for no one would feel this fugue subject to be tautological; and yet the fact of its remotely owing its origin to the chorale makes us realise in it something appropriate, for which we cannot account. The Fugue itself is of the nature of a fugal "Bearbeitung" pure and simple; for it is too closely

tied to the Chorale to develop in the same sense as the A flat minor Fugue (q.v.).

955. This was evidently an early work; for, already in March, 1878, we find Elisabeth v. Herzogenberg concluding a letter to Brahms as follows:—

“Until that letter comes from you, with which you may ransom yourself for a whole year, I comfort my sorrow (Herzleid) with your Choral-Vorspiel; which, thank God, I know by heart and can play to myself in the twilight.”

\*\* The work was first published as a supplement to the volume of the “Musikalisches Wochenblatt” for 1881, and has been arranged for piano solo by Paul Klengel.

## FUGUE IN A FLAT MINOR.

(For Organ.)

956. *Key, time and extent.*—In A flat minor (changing enharmonically to B minor); Langsam sehr ruhig (changing to “etwas belebter”); time, allabreve (4 minims); 58 bars.

957. *Thematic material.*—The nature of the fugue-subject at once implies (at all events to the student who is at all travelled in counterpoint) that abstruse business is intended. Every interval of which it consists is one favourable to scientific device. By repetition of them, also, sequence is favoured; in fact, the subject even as stated at the onset contains one sequence—as reference to the subjoined example will show:—



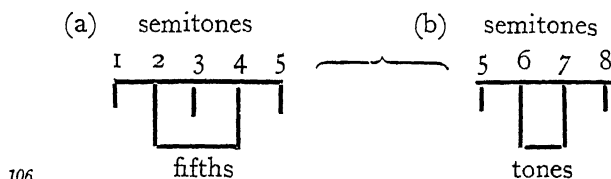
958. The separation into detached phrases gives the opportunity of release from polyphonic complications, as well as the utilisation of the augmented fourth for melodic expression without the usual disadvantages attending the use of that interval; besides which it creates additional subordinate “entries” of the fugue-theme, which, in a slow fugue (and especially in one written for the organ with a ponderous and solemn pedal effect in view) tend to bring this form much closer to the emotional.

959. To maintain that Brahms’ work will endure for all time is not to wax with warmth as an enthusiast but simply to have probed the matter. The searching effect of time, which brings everything to light, will not, for example, fail to bear

upon the perfection of structure exhibited in this subject. Here we have altogether eight intervals; consisting of semitones, tones and perfect fifths; occurring in the symmetrical proportion of

Two fifths, two tones, four semitones;

whilst a survey of the whole succession shows an even more interesting result; and one admitting, perhaps, of more graphic description by diagram; thus:—



At (a) we have the two short phrases and at (b) the longer phrase. The diagram shows the first interval to be a semitone, the next a fifth, and so on; the result being that the whole design is made visible. This reminds us of Sir Hubert Parry's saying, that Brahms' designs were "capable of being tested in all directions\*"; and it is only when we have tested them in all directions that we can realise their perfection.

960. *Description*.—Organists must always both regret and wonder at the fact that Brahms did not write more for their instrument. The work before us is ample proof that it was in his power to give just that impetus to the study to legitimate organ music which it most needs. He could have popularised the Fugue by bringing it into line with modern thought and feeling and by wedding it to other forms as he has done in this case. The present fugue has an abstruse appearance in consequence of its key and old-time notation; but, in spite of a forbidding aspect, it is of warm and even passionate character, outlined after the manner of a sonata-movement, and displaying a fine field for legitimate organ effects. The passages for soft manual, for example, after the first exposition, and before the glorious outburst of the full organ at the change of key, the exuberance of the development and the pleading return of the soft manual for purposes of contrast just before

\* Ch. I (General Treatise), § 5.

the cadence are (not to mention many other effects) all touches of the master-hand.

As for the science of this fugue a whole treatise not only might, but *ought* to be written upon it, if only for the sake of the consequent good in restoring the form to favour; for, as Erb truly observes, this is "perhaps the most perfect example of Brahms' skill in combining old-school severity with warmth of sentiment."

\*\* This Fugue was first published as a Supplement to the "Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung" in 1864; and has been arranged for piano solo by Hermann Behn.



# PIANOFORTE ARRANGEMENTS OF BRAHMS' WORKS

made by the composer himself.

## (A) FOR PIANO SOLO.

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|---|---|
| <p>Ave Maria (accomp.), Op. 12.<br/>           Begräbnissgesang (accomp.), Op. 13.<br/>           4 Gesänge (accomp.), Op. 17.<br/>           2 Motetts (voice parts), Op. 29.<br/>           Walzer, Op. 39.<br/>           ——— (easy arrangement), Op. 39.<br/>           3 Gesänge (voice parts), Op. 42.<br/>           12 Lieder und Romanzen (voice parts), Op. 44.</p> | <p>German Requiem (accomp.), Op. 45.<br/>           Rinaldo (accomp.), Op. 50.<br/>           Rhapsodie (accomp.) Op. 53.<br/>           Schicksalslied (accomp.), Op. 54.<br/>           Triumphlied (accomp.), Op. 55.<br/>           Nanie (accomp.), Op. 82.<br/>           Fest und Gedenksprüche (voice parts), Op. 109.<br/>           3 Motetts (voice parts), Op. 110.<br/>           21 Hungarian Dances.</p> |
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## (B) FOR PIANO DUET.

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| <p>Serenade, Op. 11.<br/>           Concerto, Op. 15.<br/>           Serenade, Op. 16.<br/>           Sextet, Op. 18.<br/>           Quartet, Op. 25.<br/>           Quartet, Op. 26.<br/>           Sextet, Op. 36.<br/>           German Requiem, Op. 45.<br/>           2 Quartets, Op. 51.<br/>           Liebeslieder Walzer, Op. 52.</p> | <p>Triumphlied, Op. 55.<br/>           Quartet, Op. 67.<br/>           Symphony, Op. 68.<br/>           Symphony, Op. 73.<br/>           Academic Overture, Op. 80.<br/>           Tragic Overture, Op. 81.<br/>           Quintet, Op. 88.<br/>           Symphony, Op. 90.<br/>           Symphony, Op. 98.<br/>           Quintet, Op. 111.</p> |
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## (C) FOR TWO PIANOS.

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| <p>Concerto, Op. 15.<br/>           Quintet, Op. 34.<br/>           5 of the 16 Walzer, Op. 39.</p> | <p>Orchestral Variations, Op. 56.<br/>           Concerto, Op. 83.<br/>           Symphony, Op. 98.</p> |
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